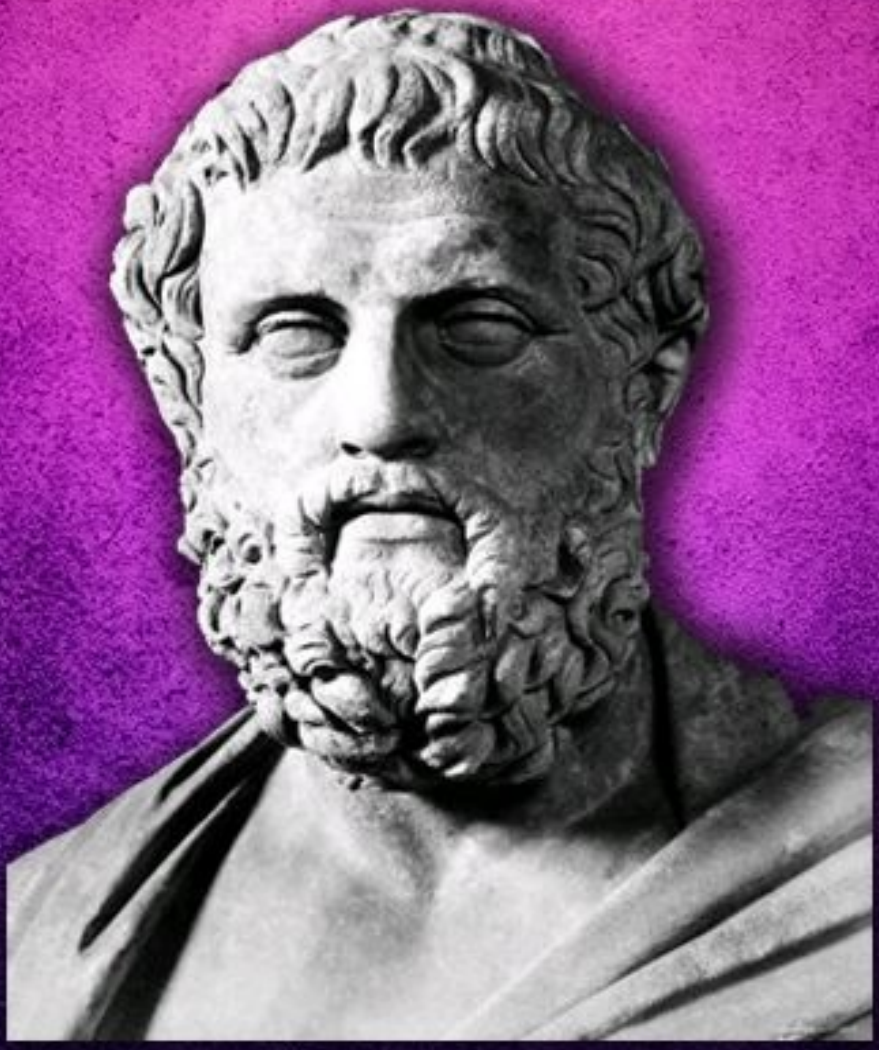
The Complete Works of
SOPHOCLES



DELPHI CLASSICS

The Complete Works of

SOPHOCLES

(497/6-406/5 BC)

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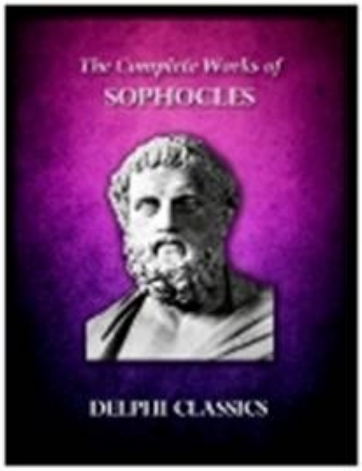

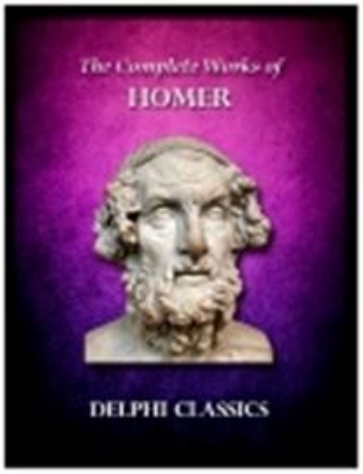

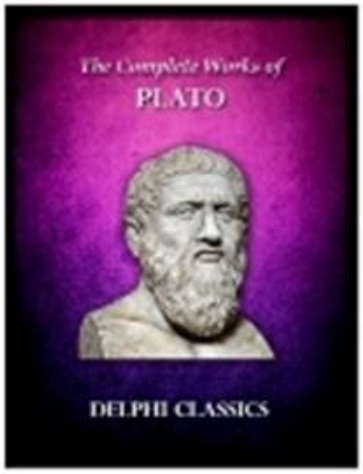

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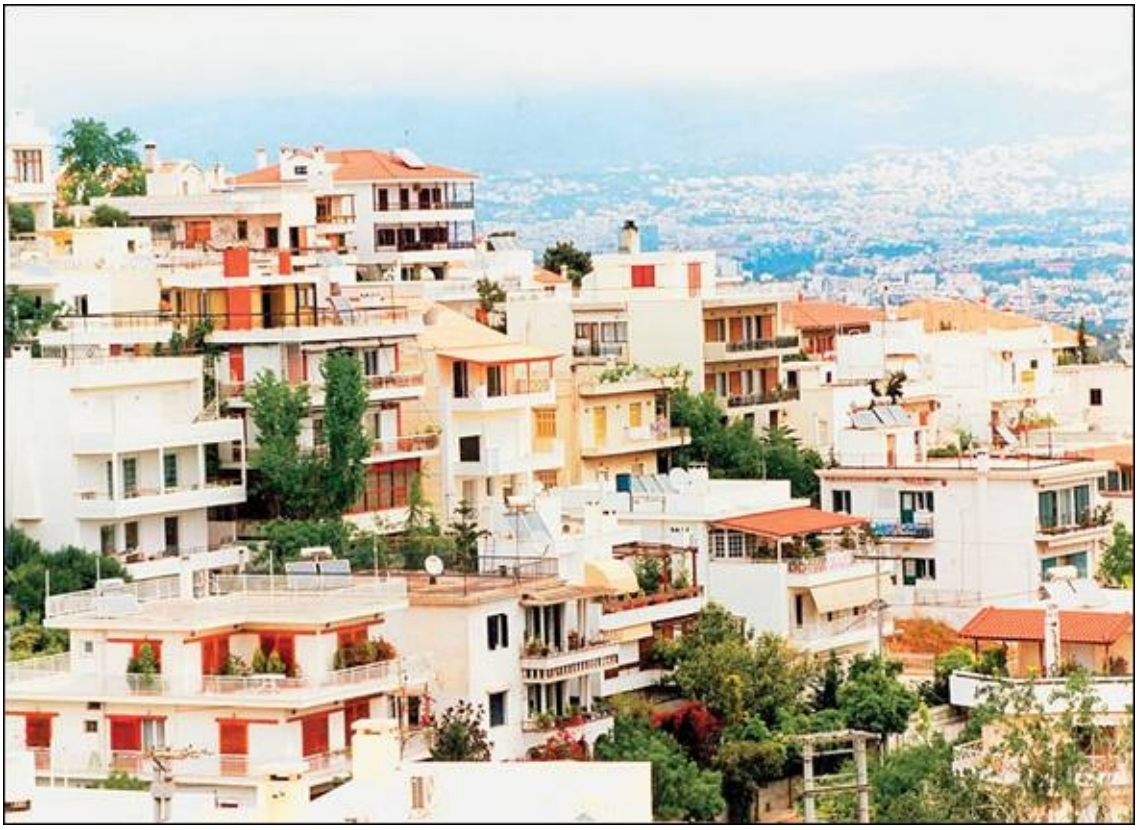
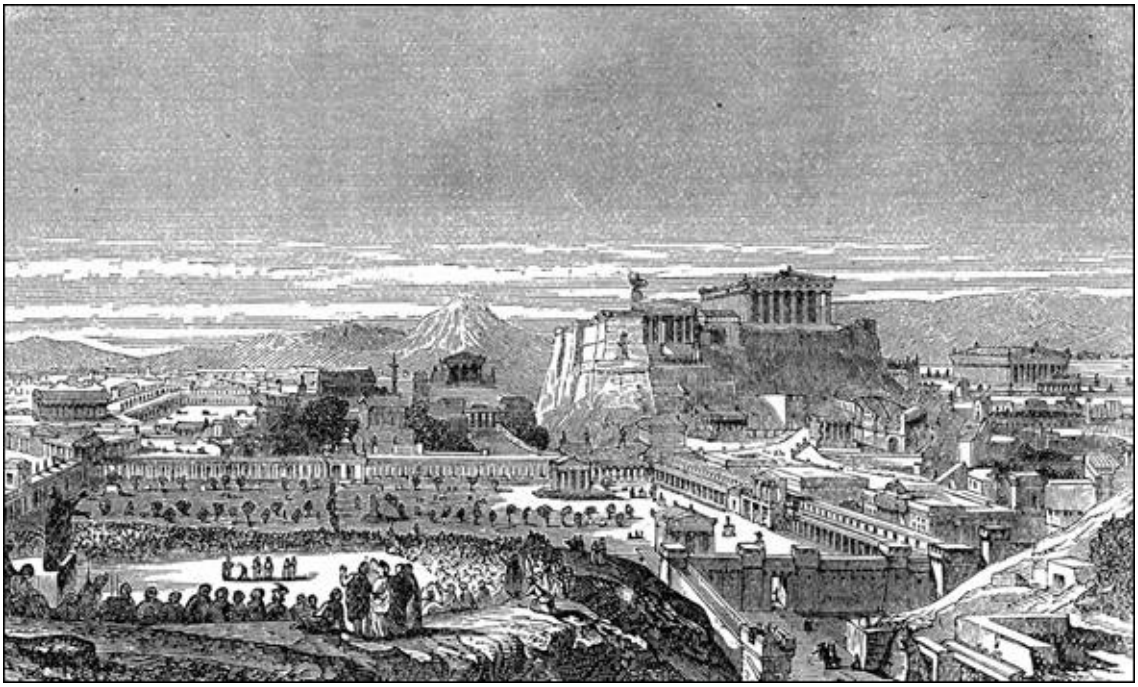
The Translations



Kolonos, a northern district of Athens — Sophocles' birthplace

A reconstruction of ancient Athens



Another reconstruction of the ancient city, as seen from the Pnyx

AJAX

Translated by Lewis Campbell

Regarded by most scholars as an early work, from 450-430 BC, this tragedy chronicles the fate of the warrior Ajax after the events of Homer's *Iliad*, but before the end of the Trojan War. At the onset of the play, Ajax is enraged when Achilles' armour was awarded to Odysseus instead of to him and so he vows to kill the Greek leaders that have disgraced him. Before he can enact his revenge, he is deceived by the goddess Athena into believing that the sheep and cattle that were taken by the Achaeans as spoil are the Greek leaders. He slaughters some of them and takes the others back to his home to torture, including a ram which he believes to be his main rival, Odysseus.

When Ajax realises what he has done, he suffers great agony over his actions, believing the other Greek warriors are laughing at him and so contemplates ending his life due to his shame. His concubine, Tecmessa, pleads for him not to leave her and her child unprotected. Ajax then gives his son, Eurysakes, his shield. He leaves the house saying that he is going out to purify himself and bury the sword given to him by Hector. Teukros, Ajax's brother, arrives in the Greek camp and is taunted by his fellow soldiers. Kalchas warns that Ajax should not be allowed to leave his tent until the end of the day or he will die. Teukros sends a messenger to Ajax's campsite with word of Kalchas' prophesy. Tecmessa and soldiers try to track him down, but are too late. Ajax had indeed buried the sword, but has left the blade sticking out of the ground and has impaled himself upon it.

The last part of the drama revolves around the dispute over what to do with Ajax's body. Ajax's half brother Teukros intends on burying him despite the demands of Menelaus and Agamemnon that the corpse is not to be buried. Odysseus, although previously Ajax's enemy, steps in and persuades them to allow Ajax a proper funeral by pointing out that even one's enemies deserve respect in death, if they were noble.

An Athenian vase depicting Odysseus and Ajax

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An ancient depiction of the suicide of Ajax

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

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MENELAUS.
AGAMEMNON.
EURYSAKÈS, *the child of Aias and Tecmessa, appears, but does not speak.*

SCENE. Before the encampment of Aias on the shore of the Troad. Afterwards a lonely place beyond Rhoeteum.

Time, towards the end of the Trojan War.

ARGUMENT

‘A wounded spirit who can bear?’

After the death of Achilles, the armour made for him by Hephaestus was to be given to the worthiest of the surviving Greeks. Although Aias was the most valiant, the judges made the award to Odysseus, because he was the wisest.

Aias in his rage attempts to kill the generals; but Athena sends madness upon him, and he makes a raid upon the flocks and herds of the army, imagining the bulls and rams to be the Argive chiefs. On awakening from his delusion, he finds that he has fallen irrecoverably from honour and from the favour of the Greeks. He also imagines that the anger of Athena is unappeasable. Under this impression he eludes the loving eyes of his captive-bride Tecmessa, and of his Salaminian comrades, and falls on his sword. (‘The soul and body rive not more in parting Than greatness going off.’)

But it is revealed through the prophet Calchas, that the wrath of Athena will last only for a day; and on the return of Teucer, Aias receives an honoured funeral, the tyrannical reclamations of the two sons of Atreus being overcome by the firm fidelity of Teucer and the magnanimity of Odysseus, who has been inspired for this purpose by Athena.

AJAX

ATHENA (above). ODYSSEUS.

ATHENA. Oft have I seen thee, Laërtiades,
Intent on some surprisal of thy foes;
As now I find thee by the seaward camp,
Where Aias holds the last place in your line,
Lingering in quest, and scanning the fresh print
Of his late footsteps, to be certified
If he keep house or no. Right well thy sense
Hath led thee forth, like some keen hound of Sparta!
The man is even but now come home, his head
And slaughterous hands reeking with ardent toil.
Thou, then, no longer strain thy gaze within
Yon gateway, but declare what eager chase
Thou followest, that a god may give thee light.

ODYSSEUS. Athena, ’tis thy voice! Dearest in heaven,
How well discerned and welcome to my soul
From that dim distance doth thine utterance fly
In tones as of Tyrrhenian trumpet clang!
Rightly hast thou divined mine errand here,
Beating this ground for Aias of the shield,
The lion-quarry whom I track to day.
For he hath wrought on us to night a deed
Past thought — if he be doer of this thing;
We drift in ignorant doubt, unsatisfied —
And I unbidden have bound me to this toil.

Brief time hath flown since suddenly we knew
That all our gathered spoil was reaved and slaughtered,
Flocks, herds, and herdmen, by some human hand,
All tongues, then, lay this deed at Aias’ door.
And one, a scout who had marked him, all alone,
With new-fleshed weapon bounding o’er the plain,
[31-66] Gave me to know it, when immediately
I darted on the trail, and here in part

I find some trace to guide me, but in part
I halt, amazed, and know not where to look.
Thou com’st full timely. For my venturous course,
Past or to come, is governed by thy will.

ATH. I knew thy doubts, Odysseus, and came forth
Zealous to guard thy perilous hunting-path.

OD. Dear Queen! and am I labouring to an end?

ATH. Thou schem’st not idly. This is Aias’ deed.

OD. What can have roused him to a work so wild?

ATH. His grievous anger for Achilles’ arms.

OD. But wherefore on the flock this violent raid?

ATH. He thought to imbrue his hands with your heart’s blood.

OD. What? Was this planned against the Argives, then?

ATH. Planned, and performed, had I kept careless guard.

OD. What daring spirit, what hardihood, was here!

ATH. Alone by night in craft he sought your tents.

OD. How? Came he near them? Won he to his goal?

ATH. He stood in darkness at the generals’ gates.

OD. What then restrained his eager hand from murder?

ATH. I turned him backward from his baleful joy,
And overswayed him with blind phantasies,
To swerve against the flocks and well-watched herd
Not yet divided from the public booty.
There plunging in he hewed the horned throng,
And with him Havoc ranged: while now he thought
To kill the Atreidae with hot hand, now this
Now that commander, as the fancy grew.
I, joining with the tumult of his mind,

Flung the wild victim on the fatal net.
Anon, this toil being overpast, he draws
The living oxen and the panting sheep
With cords to his home, not as a hornèd prey,
But as in triumph marshalling his foes:
Whom now he tortures in their bonds within.
Come, thou shalt see this madness in clear day,
[67-100] And tell to the Argives all I show thee here
Only stand firm and shrink not, I will turn
His eyes askance, not to distinguish thee,
Fear nought — Ho! thou that bindest to thy will
The limbs of those thy captives, come thou forth!
Aias! advance before thy palace gate!

OD. My Queen! what dost thou? Never call him forth.

ATH. Hush, hush! Be not so timorous, but endure.

OD. Nay, nay! Enough. He is there, and let him bide.

ATH. What fear you? Dates his valour from to day?

OD. He was and is my valiant enemy.

ATH. Then is not laughter sweetest o’er a foe?

OD. No more! I care not he should pass abroad.

ATH. You flinch from seeing the madman in full view.

OD. When sane, I ne’er had flinched before his face.

ATH. Well, but even now he shall not know thee near.

OD. How, if his eyes be not transformed or lost?

ATH. I will confound his sense although he see.

OD. Well, nothing is too hard for Deity.

ATH. Stand still and keep thy place without a word.

OD. I must. Would I were far away from here!

ATH. Aias! Again I summon thee. Why pay
So scanty heed to her who fights for thee?

Enter AIAS with a bloody scourge.

AIAS. Hail, offspring of the Highest! Pallas, hail!
Well hast thou stood by me. Triumphal gold
Shall crown thy temple for this lordly prey.

ATH. A fair intention! But resolve me this:
Hast dyed thy falchion deep in Argive blood?

AI. There is my boast; that charge I'll ne'er deny.

ATH. Have Atreus' sons felt thy victorious might?

AI. They have. No more they'll make a scorn of me!

ATH. I take it, then, they are dead.

AI. Ay, now they are dead,
Let them arise and rob me of mine arms!

[101-133] ATH. Good. Next inform us of Laërtes' son;
How stands his fortune? Hast thou let him go?

AI. The accursed fox! Dost thou inquire of him?

ATH. Ay, of Odysseus, thy late adversary.

AI. He sits within, dear lady, to my joy,
Bound; for I mean him not just yet to die.

ATH. What fine advantage wouldst thou first achieve?

AI. First, tie him to a pillar of my hall —

ATH. Poor wretch! What torment wilt thou wreak on him?

AI. Then stain his back with scourging till he die.

ATH. Nay, 'tis too much. Poor caitiff! Not the scourge!

AI. Pallas, in all things else have thou thy will,
But none shall wrest Odysseus from this doom

But none shall wrest Odysseus from this doom.

ATH. Well, since thou art determined on the deed,
Spare nought of thine intent: indulge thy hand!

AI. (waving the bloody scourge.)
I go! But thou, I charge thee, let thine aid
Be evermore like valiant as to-day.[Exit

ATH. The gods are strong, Odysseus. Dost thou see?
What man than Aias was more provident,
Or who for timeliest action more approved?

OD. I know of none. But, though he hates me sore,
I pity him, poor mortal, thus chained fast
To a wild and cruel fate, — weighing not so much
His fortune as mine own. For now I feel
All we who live are but an empty show
And idle pageant of a shadowy dream.

ATH. Then, warned by what thou seest, be thou not rash
To vaunt high words toward Heaven, nor swell thy port
Too proudly, if in puissance of thy hand
Thou passest others, or in mines of wealth.
Since Time abases and uplifts again
All that is human, and the modest heart
Is loved by Heaven, who hates the intemperate will.[Exeunt

[134-156]

CHORUS (entering).

Telamonian child, whose hand
Guards our wave-encircled land,
Salamis that breasts the sea,
Good of thine is joy to me;
But if One who reigns above
Smite thee, or if murmurs move
From fierce Danaäns in their hate
Full of threatening to thy state,
All my heart for fear doth sigh,
Shrinking like a dove’s soft eye.

Hardly had the darkness waned,[Half-Chorus I.
When our ears were filled and pained
With huge scandal on thy fame.
Telling, thine the arm that came
To the cattle-browsèd mead,
Wild with prancing of the steed,
And that ravaged there and slew
With a sword of fiery hue
All the spoils that yet remain,
By the sweat of spearmen ta'en.

Such report against thy life,[Half-Chorus II.
Whispered words with falsehood rife,
Wise Odysseus bringing near
Shrewdly gaineth many an ear:
Since invention against thee
Findeth hearing speedily,
Tallying with the moment's birth;
And with loudly waxing mirth
Heaping insult on thy grief,
Each who hears it glories more
Than the tongue that told before.
Every slander wins belief
Aimed at souls whose worth is chief:
Shot at me, or one so small,
Such a bolt might harmless fall.
[157-192] Ever toward the great and high
Creepeth climbing jealousy
Yet the low without the tall
Make at need a tottering wall
Let the strong the feeble save
And the mean support the brave.

CHORUS.

Ah! 'twere vain to tune such song
'Mid the nought discerning throng
Who are clamouring now 'gainst thee
Long and loud, and strengthless we,
Mighty chieftain, thou away,

To withstand the gathering fray
Flocking fowl with carping cry
Seem they, lurking from thine eye,
Till the royal eagle's poise
Overawe the paltry noise
Till before thy presence hushed
Sudden sink they, mute and crushed.

Did bull slaying Artemis, Zeus' cruel daughterI 1
(Ah, fearful rumour, fountain of my shame!)
Prompt thy fond heart to this disastrous slaughter
Of the full herd stored in our army's name!
Say, had her blood stained temple missed the kindness
Of some vow promised fruit of victory,
Foiled of some glorious armour through thy blindness,
Or fell some stag ungraced by gift from thee?
Or did stern Ares venge his thankless spear
Through this night foray that hath cost thee dear!

For never, if thy heart were not distractedI 2
By stings from Heaven, O child of Telamon,
Wouldst thou have bounded leftward, to have acted
Thus wildly, spoiling all our host hath won!
Madness might fall some heavenly power forfend it
But if Odysseus and the tyrant lords
Suggest a forged tale, O rise to end it,
Nor fan the fierce flame of their withering words!
[201-226] Forth from thy tent, and let thine eye confound
The brood of Sisyphus that would thee wound!

Too long hast thou been fixed in grim repose,III
Heightening the haughty malice of thy foes,
That, while thou porest by the sullen sea,
Through breezy glades advanceth fearlessly,
A mounting blaze with crackling laughter fed
From myriad throats; whence pain and sorrow bred
Within my bosom are establishèd.

Enter TECMESSA.

TECMESSA. Helpers of Ajas' vessel's speed

TECMESSA. Helpers of Aias' vessel's speed,
Erechtheus' earth-derivèd seed,
Sorrows are ours who truly care
For the house of Telamon afar.
The dread, the grand, the rugged form
Of him we know,
Is stricken with a troublous storm;
Our Aias' glory droopeth low.

CHORUS. What burden through the darkness fell
Where still at eventide 'twas well?
Phrygian Teleutas' daughter, say;
Since Aias, foremost in the fray,
Disdaining not the spear-won bride,
Still holds thee nearest at his side,
And thou may'st solve our doubts aright.

TEC. How shall I speak the dreadful word?
How shall ye live when ye have heard?
Madness hath seized our lord by night
And blasted him with hopeless blight.
Such horrid victims mightst thou see
Huddled beneath yon canopy,
Torn by red hands and dyed in blood,
Dread offerings to his direful mood.

CH. What news of our fierce lord thy story showeth,1
Sharp to endure, impossible to fly!
News that on tongues of Danaäns hourly groweth,
Which Rumour's myriad voices multiply!
[227-266] Alas! the approaching doom awakes my terror.
The man will die, disgraced in open day,
Whose dark dyed steel hath dared through mad brained error
The mounted herdmen with their herds to slay.

TEC. O horror! Then 'twas there he found
The flock he brought as captives tied,
And some he slew upon the ground,
And some, side smiting, sundered wide
Two white foot rams he backward drew,
And bound. Of one he shore and threw

The tipmost tongue and head away,
The other to an upright stay
He tied, and with a harness thong
Doubled in hand, gave whizzing blows,
Echoing his lashes with a song
More dire than mortal fury knows.

CH. Ah! then ’tis time, our heads in mantles hiding,2
Our feet on some stol’n pathway now to ply,
Or with swift oarage o’er the billows gliding,
With ordered stroke to make the good ship fly
Such threats the Atridae, armed with two fold power,
Launch to assail us. Oh, I sadly fear
Stones from fierce hands on us and him will shower,
Whose heavy plight no comfort may come near.

TEC. ’Tis changed, his rage, like sudden blast,
Without the lightning gleam is past
And now that Reason’s light returns,
New sorrow in his spirit burns.
For when we look on self made woe,
In which no hand but ours had part,
Thought of such griefs and whence they flow
Brings aching misery to the heart.

CH. If he hath ceased to rave, he should do well
The account of evil lessens when ’tis past.

TEC. If choice were given you, would you rather choose
Hurting your friends, yourself to feel delight,
[267-302] Or share with them in one commingled pain?

CH. The two fold trouble is more terrible.

TEC. Then comes our torment now the fit is o’er.

CH. How mean’st thou by that word? I fail to see.

TEC. He in his rage had rapture of delight
And knew not how he grieved us who stood near
And saw the madding tempest ruining him.
But now ’tis over and he breathes anew

But now 'tis over and he breathes anew;
The counterblast of sorrow shakes his soul,
Whilst our affliction vexeth as before,
Have we not double for our single woe?

CH. I feel thy reasoning move me, and I fear
Some heavenly stroke hath fallen. How else, when the end
Of stormy sickness brings no cheering ray?

TEC. Our state is certain. Dream not but 'tis so.

CH. How first began the assault of misery?
Tell us the trouble, for we share the pain.

TEC. It toucheth you indeed, and ye shall hear
All from the first. 'Twas midnight, and the lamp
Of eve had died, when, seizing his sharp blade,
He sought on some vain errand to creep forth.
I broke in with my word: 'Aias, what now?
Why thus uncalled for salliest thou? No voice
Of herald summoned thee. No trumpet blew.
What wouldst thou when the camp is hushed in sleep?'
He with few words well known to women's ears
Checked me: 'The silent partner is the best.'
I saw how 'twas and ceased. Forth then he fared
Alone — What horror passed upon the plain
This night, I know not. But he drags within,
Tied in a throng, bulls, shepherd dogs, and spoil
Of cattle and sheep. Anon he butchers them,
Felling or piercing, hacking or tearing wide,
Ribs from breast, limb from limb. Others in rage
He seized and bound and tortured, brutes for men.
Last, out he rushed before the doors, and there
Whirled forth wild language to some shadowy form,
Flouting the generals and Laërtes' son
[303-341] With torrent laughter and loud triumphing
What in his raid he had wreaked to their despite.
Then diving back within — the fitful storm
Slowly assuaging left his spirit clear.
And when his eye had lightened through the room

Cumbered with ruin, smiting on his brow
He roared; and, tumbling down amid the wreck
Of woolly carnage he himself had made,
Sate with clenched hand tight twisted in his hair.
Long stayed he so in silence. Then flashed forth
Those frightful words of threatening vehemence,
That bade me show him all the night's mishap,
And whither he was fallen I, dear my friends,
Prevailed on through my fear, told all I knew.
And all at once he raised a bitter cry,
Which heretofore I ne'er had heard, for still
He made us think such doleful utterance
Betokened the dull craven spirit, and still
Dumb to shrill wailings, he would only moan
With half heard muttering, like an angry bull.
But now, by such dark fortune overpowered,
Foodless and dry, amid the quivering heap
His steel hath quelled, all quietly he broods;
And out of doubt his mind intends some harm:
Such words, such groans, burst from him. O my friends. —
Therefore I hastened, — enter and give aid
If aught ye can! Men thus forgone will oft
Grow milder through the counsel of a friend.

CH. Teleutas' child! we shudder at thy tale
That fatal frenzy wastes our hero's soul.

AIAS (within). Woe's me, me, me!

TEC. More cause anon! Hear ye not Aias there,
How sharp the cry that shrills from him?

AI. Woe! Woe!

CH. Madly it sounds — Or springs it of deep grief
For proofs of madness harrowing to his eye?

AI. Boy, boy!

TEC. What means he? Oh, Eurysakes!
He cries on thee. Where art thou? O my heart!

[342-376] AI. Teucer I call! Where ‘s Teucer? Will he ne’er
Come from the chase, but leave me to my doom?

CH. Not madness now. Disclose him. Let us look.
Haply the sight of us may calm his soul.

TEC. There, then; I open to your view the form
Of Aias, and his fortunes as they are.[AIAS is discovered

AI. Dear comrades of the deep, whose truth and loveI 1
Stand forth alone unbroken in my woe,
Behold what gory sea
Of storm-lashed agony
Doth round and round me flow!

CH. (to TEC.). Too true thy witness: for the fact cries out
Wild thoughts were here and Reason’s lamp extinct.

AI. Strong helpers of sea-speed, whose nimble handI 2
Plied hither the salt oar with circling stroke,
No shepherd there was found
To give the avenging wound.
Come, lay me with the flock!

CH. Speak no rash word! nor curing ill with ill
Augment the plague of this calamity.

AI. Mark ye the brave and bold,II 1
Whom none could turn of old,
When once he set his face to the fierce fight?
Now beasts that thought no harm
Have felt this puissant arm.
O laughter of my foes! O mockery of my might!

TEC. Aias, my lord! I entreat thee, speak not so!

AI. Thou here! Away! begone, and trouble me not!
O! O!

CH. Be softened! bear a steadier mind!

AI. O heaven-accursèd hand
That let the ruffians go

That let the ruffians go,
But falling ‘midst the horn’d and bleating band,
Made darkling blood-streams flow!

[377-409] CH. Why vex thy heart with what is over and done?
Do what we may, this ne’er will alter now.

AI. Child of Laërtes old,II 2
Thou that dost still behold
And still contrive all shapes of monstrous ill,
Winding in foulest ways
Through the army’s sinful maze, —
Now even for pleasure thou may’st laugh thy fill.

CH. Laughter and tears are in the gift of God.

AI. Ay, might I see him, though thus broken, — ay me!
Even yet —

CH. Nay, vaunt not. Look where thou art fallen.

AI. Source where my life-blood springs,
O Zeus, might I but slay
That crafty plague, with those twin-sceptred kings,
Then breathe my life away!

TEC. Pray thus, and pray that I too be no more!
If thou wert gone, what were my life to me?

AI. Darkness! my only light!III 1
O nether gloom, to me
Brighter than morning to the wakeful eye!
Take me to dwell with thee.
Take me! What help? Zeus’ daughter with fell might
Torments me sore. I may not look on high,
Nor to the tribe of momentary men. —
Oh, whither, then,
Should it avail to fly?
Ah! whither should I go and stay?
All here is ruin. This mad prey
Shames me for evermore:
Vengeance is at the door;

Yea, all the Achaean host, with armèd hand,
Is ready at command
To slay me o’er and o’er.

[410-447] TEC. Woe ‘s me! to hear from one so good and true
Words he had scorned to utter in past days.

AI. Grey firths of foaming brine,III 2 And ye, deep groves, that crown
The sea-caves and long cliffs upon the shore,
Too long did ye confine
My life about the walls of Troia’s town:
But no more now! a breathing man, no more!
The wise in heart may duly learn that lore.
Let Xanthus know,
Whose waters neighbouring flow,
And minister to Argive men:
One man he ne’er shall see again;
One, I will vaunt it forth!
Highest in warlike worth
Of all Greek forms that Troia’s towers have eyed:
Now, shorn of all that pride,
I lie thus low.

CH. I know not how to let thee speak, nor how
To silence thee. Such evils close thee round.

AI. Ay me!
Could human thought have prophesied
My name would thus give echo to mine ill?
‘Ai’ now for Aias, doubly, trebly said,
Sorts all too well to mark my misery;
Whose father from this land of Troy, as noblest
Of all the host, carrying the fairest prize,
Came girt about with glory to his home.
But I his son, not less of might than he,
Nor poorer in the achievements of my hand,
To this same region following in my prime,
Am scouted by the Achaeans and destroyed.
Yet know I one thing well. Had Peleus’ child,
Living, adjudged his armour as a meed

Of well-tried bravery, no grasp save mine
Had clutched it. But the Atridae with mean craft
Conveyed his heirloom to a wit-proud knave,
Whilst Aias' peerless prowess was despised.
And had not this mine eye and mind distraught
[448-486] Glanced from my purpose, ne'er again had they
Perverted judgement. But the invincible
Stern daughter of the Highest, with baneful eye,
Even as mine arm descended, baffled me,
And hurled upon my soul a frenzied plague,
To stain my hand with these dumb victims' blood.
And those mine enemies exult in safety, —
Not with my will; but where a God misguides,
Strong arms are thwarted and the weakling lives.
Now, what remains? Heaven hates me, 'tis too clear:
The Grecian host abhor me: Troy, with all
This country round our camp, is my sworn foe.
Shall I, across the Aegean sailing home,
Leave these Atridae and their fleet forlorn?
How shall I dare to front my father's eye?
How will he once endure to look on me,
Denuded of the prize of high renown,
Whose coronal stood sparkling on his brow?
No! 'twere too dreadful. Then shall I advance
Before the Trojan battlements, and there
In single conflict doing valiantly
Last die upon their spears? Nay, for by this
I might perchance make Atreus' offspring glad.
That may not be imagined. I must find
Some act to let my grey-haired father feel
No heartless recreant once called him sire.
Shame on the wight who when beset with ill
Cares to live on in misery unrelieved.
Can hour outlasting hour make less or more
Of death? Whereby then can it furnish joy?
That mortal weighs for nothing-worth with me,
Whom Hope can comfort with her fruitless fire.
Honour in life or honour in the grave
Befits the noble heart. You hear my will.

CH. From thine own spirit, Aias, all may tell,
That utterance came, and none have prompted thee.
Yet stay thy hurrying thought, and by thy friends
Be ruled to loose this burden from thy mind.

TEC. O my great master! heaviest of all woe
Is theirs whose life is crushed beyond recall.
[487-526] I, born of one the mightiest of the free
And wealthiest in the Phrygian land, am now
A captive. So Heaven willed, and thy strong arm
Determined. Therefore, since the hour that made
My being one with thine, I breathe for thee;
And I beseech thee by the sacred fire
Of home, and by the sweetness of the night
When from thy captive I became thy bride,
Leave me not guardless to the unworthy touch
And cruel taunting of thine enemies'
For, shouldst thou die and leave us, then shall I
Borne off by Argive violence with thy boy
Eat from that day the bread of slavery.
And some one of our lords shall smite me there
With galling speech: Behold the concubine
Of Aias, first of all the Greeks for might,
How envied once, worn with what service now!
So will they speak; and while my quailing heart
Shall sink beneath its burden, clouds of shame
Will dim thy glory and degrade thy race.
Oh! think but of thy father, left to pine
In doleful age, and let thy mother's grief —
Who, long bowed down with many a careful year,
Prays oftentimes thou may'st return alive —
O'er awe thee. Yea, and pity thine own son,
Unsheltered in his boyhood, lorn of thee,
With bitter foes to tend his orphanhood,
Think, O my lord, what sorrow in thy death
Thou send'st on him and me. For I have nought
To lean to but thy life. My fatherland
Thy spear hath ruined. Fate — not thou — hath sent
My sire and mother to the home of death

What wealth have I to comfort me for thee?
What land of refuge? Thou art all my stay
Oh, of me too take thought! Shall men have joy,
And not remember? Or shall kindness fade?
Say, can the mind be noble, where the stream
Of gratitude is withered from the spring?

CH. Aias, I would thy heart were touched like mine
With pity; then her words would win thy praise.

[527-565] AI. My praise she shall not miss, if she perform
My bidding with firm heart, and fail not here.

TEC. Dear Aias, I will fail in nought thou bidst me.

AI. Bring me my boy, that I may see his face.

TEC. Oh, in my terror I conveyed him hence!

AI. Clear of this mischief, mean'st thou? or for what?

TEC. Lest he might run to thee, poor child, and die.

AI. That issue had been worthy of my fate!

TEC. But I kept watch to fence his life from harm.

AI. 'Twas wisely done. I praise thy foresight there.

TEC. Well, since 'tis so, how can I help thee now?

AI. Give me to speak to him and see him near.

TEC. He stands close by with servants tending him.

AI. Then why doth he not come, but still delay?

TEC. Thy father calls thee, child. Come, lead him hither,
Whichever of you holds him by the hand.

AI. Moves he? or do thine accents idly fall?

TEC. See, where thy people bring him to thine eye.

AI. Lift him to me: lift him! He will not fear
At sight of this fresh havoc of the sword,
If rightly he be fathered of my blood.
Like some young colt he must be trained and taught
To run fierce courses with his warrior sire.
Be luckier than thy father, boy! but else
Be like him, and thy life will not be low.
One thing even now I envy thee, that none
Of all this misery pierces to thy mind.
For life is sweetest in the void of sense,
Ere thou know joy or sorrow. But when this
Hath found thee, make thy father's enemies
Feel the great parent in the valiant child.
Meantime grow on in tender youthfulness,
Nursed by light breezes, gladdening this thy mother.
No Greek shall trample thee with brutal harm,
That I know well, though I shall not be near —
So stout a warder to protect thy life
I leave in Teucer. He'll not fail, though now
He follow far the chase upon his foes.
My trusty warriors, people of the sea,
[566-596] Be this your charge, no less, — and bear to him
My clear commandment, that he take this boy
Home to my fatherland, and make him known
To Telamon, and Eriboea too,
My mother. Let him tend them in their age.
And, for mine armour, let not that be made
The award of Grecian umpires or of him
Who ruined me. But thou, named of the shield,
Eurysakes, hold mine, the unpierceable
Seven-hided buckler, and by the well stitched thong
Grasp firm and wield it mightily. — The rest
Shall lie where I am buried. — Take him now,
Quickly, and close the door. No tears! What! weep
Before the tent? How women crave for pity!
Make fast, I say. No wise physician dreams
With droning charms to salve a desperate sore.

CH. There sounds a vehement ardour in thy words
That likes me not. I fear thy shamened tongue

That likes me not. I fear thy sharpened tongue.

TEC. Aias, my lord, what act is in thy mind?

AI. Inquire not, question not; be wise, thou’rt best.

TEC. How my heart sinks! Oh, by thy child, by Heaven,
I pray thee on my knees, forsake us not!

AI. Thou troublest me. What! know’st thou not that Heaven
Hath ceased to be my debtor from to-day?

TEC. Hush! Speak not so.

AI. Speak thou to those that hear.

TEC. Will you not hear me?

AI. Canst thou not be still?

TEC. My fears, my fears!

AI. (to the Attendants). Come, shut me in, I say.

TEC. Oh, yet be softened!

AI. ’Tis a foolish hope,
If thou deem’st now to mould me to thy will.
[Aias is withdrawn. Exit Tecmessa

CHORUS.

Island of glory! whom the glowing eyesI 1
Of all the wondering world immortalize,
[597-648] Thou, Salamis, art planted evermore,
Happy amid the wandering billows’ roar;
While I — ah, woe the while! — this weary time,
By the green wold where flocks from Ida stray,
Lie worn with fruitless hours of wasted prime,
Hoping — ah, cheerless hope! — to win my way
Where Hades’ horrid gloom shall hide me from the day.

Aias is with me, yea, but crouching low,I 2
Where Heaven-sent madness haunts his overthrow,

Beyond my cure or tendance: woful plight!
Whom thou, erewhile, to head the impetuous fight,
Sent'st forth, thy conquering champion. Now he feeds
His spirit on lone paths, and on us brings
Deep sorrow; and all his former peerless deeds
Of prowess fall like unremembered things
From Atreus' loveless brood, this caitiff brace of kings.

Ah! when his mother, full of days and bowedII 1
With hoary eld, shall hear his ruined mind,
How will she mourn aloud!
Not like the warbler of the dale,
The bird of piteous wail,
But in shrill strains far borne upon the wind,
While on the withered breast and thin white hair
Falls the resounding blow, the rending of despair.

Best hid in death were he whom madness drivesII 2
Remediless; if, through his father's race
Born to the noblest place
Among the war-worn Greeks, he lives
By his own light no more,
Self-aliened from the self he knew before.
Oh, hapless sire, what woe thine ear shall wound!
One that of all thy line no life save this hath found.

Enter Aias with a bright sword, and Tecmessa, severally.

AI. What change will never-terminable Time
Not heave to light, what hide not from the day?
What chance shall win men's marvel? Mightiest oaths
[649-689] Fall frustrate, and the steely-tempered will.
Ay, and even mine, that stood so diamond-keen
Like iron lately dipped, droops now dis-edged
And weakened by this woman, whom to leave
A widow with her orphan to my foes,
Dulls me with pity. I will go to the baths
And meadows near the cliff, and purging there
My dark pollution, I will screen my soul
From reach of Pallas' grievous wrath. I will find

Same place untrodden, and digging of the soil
Where none shall see, will bury this my sword,
Weapon of hate! for Death and Night to hold
Evermore underground. For, since my hand
Had this from Hector mine arch-enemy,
No kindness have I known from Argive men.
So true that saying of the bygone world,
‘A foe’s gift is no gift, and brings no good.’
Well, we will learn of Time. Henceforth I’ll bow
To heavenly ordinance and give homage due
To Atreus’ sons. Who rules, must be obeyed.
Since nought so fierce and terrible but yields
Place to Authority. Wild Winter’s snows
Make way for bounteous Summer’s flowery tread,
And Night’s sad orb retires for lightsome Day
With his white steeds to illumine the glad sky.
The furious storm-blast leaves the groaning sea
Gently to rest. Yea, the all-subduer Sleep
Frees whom he binds, nor holds enchained for aye.
And shall not men be taught the temperate will?
Yea, for I now know surely that my foe
Must be so hated, as being like enough
To prove a friend hereafter, and my friend
So far shall have mine aid, as one whose love
Will not continue ever. Men have found
But treacherous harbour in companionship.
Our ending, then, is peaceful. Thou, my girl,
Go in and pray the Gods my heart’s desire
Be all fulfilled. My comrades, join her here,
Honouring my wishes; and if Teucer come,
Bid him toward us be mindful, kind toward you.
[690-718] I must go — whither I must go. Do ye
But keep my word, and ye may learn, though now
Be my dark hour, that all with me is well.
[Exit towards the country. Tecmessa retires

CHORUS.

A shudder of love thrills through me. Joy! I soar1
O Pan, wild Pan![They dance

O Pan, wild Pan![They dance
Come from Cyllenè hoar —
Come from the snow drift, the rock-ridge, the glen!
Leaving the mountain bare
Fleet through the salt sea-air,
Mover of dances to Gods and to men.
Whirl me in Cnossian ways — thrid me the Nysian maze!
Come, while the joy of the dance is my care!
Thou too, Apollo, come
Bright from thy Delian home,
Bringer of day,
Fly o'er the southward main
Here in our hearts to reign,
Loved to repose there and kindly to stay.

Horror is past. Our eyes have rest from pain.2
O Lord of Heaven![They dance
Now blithesome day again
Purely may smile on our swift-sailing fleet,
Since, all his woe forgot,
Aias now faileth not
Aught that of prayer and Heaven-worship is meet.
Time bringeth mighty aid — nought but in time doth fade:
Nothing shall move me as strange to my thought.
Aias our lord hath now
Cleared his wrath-burdened brow
Long our despair,
Ceased from his angry feud
And with mild heart renewed
Peace and goodwill to the high-sceptred pair.

[719-754]

Enter Messenger.

MESSENGER. Friends, my first news is Teucer's presence here,
Fresh from the Mysian heights; who, as he came
Right toward the generals' quarter, was assailed
With outcry from the Argives in a throng:
For when they knew his motion from afar
They swarmed around him, and with shouts of blame

From each side one and all assaulted him
As brother to the man who had gone mad
And plotted ‘gainst the host, — threatening aloud,
Spite of his strength, he should be stoned, and die.
— So far strife ran, that swords unscabbarded
Crossed blades, till as it mounted to the height
Age interposed with counsel, and it fell.
But where is Aias to receive my word?
Tidings are best told to the rightful ear.

CH. Not in the hut, but just gone forth, preparing
New plans to suit his newly altered mind.

MESS. Alas!
Too tardy then was he who sped me hither;
Or I have proved too slow a messenger.

CH. What point is lacking for thine errand’s speed?

MESS. Teucer was resolute the man should bide
Close held within-doors till himself should come.

CH. Why, sure his going took the happiest turn
And wisest, to propitiate Heaven’s high wrath.

MESS. The height of folly lives in such discourse,
If Calchas have the wisdom of a seer.

CH. What knowest thou of our state? What saith he? Tell.

MESS. I can tell only what I heard and saw.
Whilst all the chieftains and the Atridae twain
Were seated in a ring, Calchas alone
Rose up and left them, and in Teucer’s palm
Laid his right hand full friendly; then out-spake
With strict injunction by all means i’ the world
To keep beneath yon covert this one day
Your hero, and not suffer him to rove,
[755-789] If he would see him any more alive.
For through this present light — and ne’er again —
Holy Athena, so he said, will drive him

Before her anger. Such calamitous woe
Strikes down the unprofitable growth that mounts
Beyond his measure and provokes the sky.
‘Thus ever,’ said the prophet, ‘must he fall
Who in man’s mould hath thoughts beyond a man.
And Aias, ere he left his father’s door,
Made foolish answer to his prudent sire.
‘My son,’ said Telamon, ‘choose victory
Always, but victory with an aid from Heaven.’
How loftily, how madly, he replied!
‘Father, with heavenly help men nothing worth
May win success. But I am confident
Without the Gods to pluck this glory down.’
So huge the boast he vaunted! And again
When holy Pallas urged him with her voice
To hurl his deadly spear against the foe,
He turned on her with speech of awful sound:
‘Goddess, by other Greeks take thou thy stand;
Where I keep rank, the battle ne’er shall break.’
Such words of pride beyond the mortal scope
Have won him Pallas’ wrath, unlovely meed.
But yet, perchance, so be it he live to-day,
We, with Heaven’s succour, may restore his peace.’ —
Thus far the prophet, when immediately
Teucer dispatched me, ere the assembly rose,
Bearing to thee this missive to be kept
With all thy care. But if my speed be lost,
And Calchas’ word have power, the man is dead.

CH. O trouble-tost Tecmessa, born to woe,
Come forth and see what messenger is here!
This news bites near the bone, a death to joy.

Enter TECMESSA.

TEC. Wherefore again, when sorrow’s cruel storm
Was just abating, break ye my repose?

CH. (pointing to the Messenger).
Hear what he saith, and how he comes to bring

[797-821] News of our Aias that hath torn my heart.

TEC. Oh me! what is it, man? Am I undone?

MESS. Thy case I know not; but of Aias this,
That if he roam abroad, ’tis dangerous.

TEC. He is, indeed, abroad. Oh! tell me quickly!

MESS. ’Tis Teucer’s strong command to keep him close
Beneath this roof, nor let him range alone.

TEC. But where is Teucer? and what means his word?

MESS. Even now at hand, and eager to make known
That Aias, if he thus go forth, must fall.

TEC. Alas! my misery! Whence learned he this?

MESS. From Thestor’s prophet-offspring, who to-day
Holds forth to Aias choice of life or death.

TEC. Woe’s me! O friends, this desolating blow
Is falling! Oh, stand forward to prevent!
And some bring Teucer with more haste, while some
Explore the western bays and others search
Eastward to find your hero’s fatal path!
For well I see I am cheated and cast forth
From the old favour. Child, what shall I do? [Looking at EURYSAKES
We must not stay. I too will fare along,
go far as I have power. Come, let us go.
Bestir ye! ’Tis no moment to sit still,
If we would save him who now speeds to die.

CH. I am ready. Come! Fidelity of foot,
And swift performance, shall approve me true.[Exeunt omnes

The scene changes to a lonely wooded spot.

AIAS (discovered alone).

The sacrificer stands prepared, — and when
More keen? Let me take time for thinking, too!

This gift of Hector, whom of stranger men
I hated most with heart and eyes, is set
In hostile Trojan soil, with grinding hone
Fresh-pointed, and here planted by my care
[822-863] Thus firm, to give me swift and friendly death.
Fine instrument, so much for thee! Then, first,
Thou, for ’tis meet, great Father, lend thine aid.
For no great gift I sue thee. Let some voice
Bear Teucer the ill news, that none but he
May lift my body, newly fallen in death
About my bleeding sword, ere I be spied
By some of those who hate me, and be flung
To dogs and vultures for an outcast prey.
So far I entreat thee, Lord of Heaven. And thou,
Hermes, conductor of the shadowy dead,
Speed me to rest, and when with this sharp steel
I have cleft a sudden passage to my heart,
At one swift bound waft me to painless slumber!
But most be ye my helpers, awful Powers,
Who know no blandishments, but still perceive
All wicked deeds i’ the world — strong, swift, and sure,
Avenging Furies, understand my wrong,
See how my life is ruined, and by whom.
Come, ravin on Achaean flesh — spare none;
Rage through the camp! — Last, thou that driv’st thy course
Up yon steep Heaven, thou Sun, when thou behold’st
My fatherland, checking thy golden rein,
Report my fall, and this my fatal end,
To my old sire, and the poor soul who tends him.
Ah, hapless one! when she shall hear this word,
How she will make the city ring with woe!
‘Twere from the business idly to condole.
To work, then, and dispatch. O Death! O Death!
Now come, and welcome! Yet with thee, hereafter,
I shall find close communion where I go.
But unto thee, fresh beam of shining Day,
And thee, thou travelling Sun-god, I may speak
Now, and no more for ever. O fair light!
O sacred fields of Salamis my home!

Thou, firm set natal hearth: Athens renowned,
And ye her people whom I love; O rivers,
Brooks, fountains here — yea, even the Trojan plain
I now invoke! — kind fosterers, farewell!
[864-901] This one last word from Aias peals to you:
Henceforth my speech will be with souls unseen[Falls on his sword

CHORUS (re-entering severally).

CH. A. Toil upon toil brings toil,
And what save trouble have I?
Which path have I not tried?
And never a place arrests me with its tale.
Hark! lo, again a sound!

CH. B. ’Tis we, the comrades of your good ship’s crew.

CH. A. Well, sirs?

CH. B. We have trodden all the westward arm o’ the bay.

CH. A. Well, have ye found?

CH. B. Troubles enow, but nought to inform our sight.

CH. A. Nor yet along the road that fronts the dawn
Is any sign of Aias to be seen.

CH. Who then will tell me, who? What hard sea-liver,1
What toiling fisher in his sleepless quest,
What Mysian nymph, what oozy Thracian river,
Hath seen our wanderer of the tameless breast?
Where? tell me where!
’Tis hard that I, far-toiling voyager,
Crossed by some evil wind,
Cannot the haven find,
Nor catch his form that flies me, where? ah! where?

TEC. (behind). Oh, woe is me! woe, woe!

CH. A. Who cries there from the covert of the grove?

TEC. O boundless misery!

CH. B. Steeped in this audible sorrow I behold
Tecmessa, poor fate-burdened bride of war.

TEC. Friends, I am spoiled, lost, ruined, overthrown!

CH. A. What ails thee now?

TEC. See where our Aias lies, but newly slain,
Fallen on his sword concealed within the ground,

CH. Woe for my hopes of home!
Aias, my lord, thou hast slain
[902-938] Thy ship-companion on the salt sea foam.
Alas for us, and thee,
Child of calamity!

TEC. So lies our fortune. Well may'st thou complain.

CH. A. Whose hand employed he for the deed of blood?

TEC. His own, 'tis manifest. This planted steel,
Fixed by his hand, gives verdict from his breast.

CH. Woe for my fault, my loss!
Thou hast fallen in blood alone,
And not a friend to cross
Or guard thee. I, deaf, senseless as a stone,
Left all undone. Oh, where, then, lies the stern
Aias, of saddest name, whose purpose none might turn?

TEC. No eye shall see him. I will veil him round
With this all covering mantle; since no heart
That loved him could endure to view him there,
With ghastly expiration spouting forth
From mouth and nostrils, and the deadly wound,
The gore of his self slaughter. Ah, my lord!
What shall I do? What friend will carry thee?
Oh, where is Teucer! Timely were his hand,
Might he come now to smooth his brother's corse.
O thou most noble, here ignobly laid,

Even enemies methinks must mourn thy fate!

CH. Ah! ’twas too clear thy firm knit thoughts would fashion,2
Early or late, an end of boundless woe!
Such heaving groans, such bursts of heart-bruised passion,
Midnight and morn, bewrayed the fire below.
‘The Atridae might beware!’
A plenteous fount of pain was opened there,
What time the strife was set,
Wherein the noblest met,
Grappling the golden prize that kindled thy despair!

TEC. Woe, woe is me!

CH. Deep sorrow wrings thy soul, I know it well.

[939-974] TEC. O woe, woe, woe!

CH. Thou may’st prolong thy moan, and be believed,
Thou that hast lately lost so true a friend.

TEC. Thou may’st imagine; ’tis for me to know.

CH. Ay, ay, ’tis true.

TEC. Alas, my child! what slavish tasks and hard
We are drifting to! What eyes control our will!

CH. Ay me! Through thy complaint
I hear the wordless blow
Of two high-throned, who rule without restraint
Of Pity. Heaven forfend
What evil they intend!

TEC. The work of Heaven hath brought our life thus low.

CH. ’Tis a sore burden to be laid on men.

TEC. Yet such the mischief Zeus’ resistless maid,
Pallas, hath planned to make Odysseus glad.

CH. O’er that dark-featured soul
What waves of pride shall roll,

What floods of laughter flow,
Rudely to greet this madness-prompted woe,
Alas! from him who all things dares endure,
And from that lordly pair, who hear, and seat them sure!

TEC. Ay, let them laugh and revel o'er his fall!
Perchance, albeit in life they missed him not,
Dead, they will cry for him in straits of war.
For dullards know not goodness in their hand,
Nor prize the jewel till 'tis cast away.
To me more bitter than to them 'twas sweet,
His death to him was gladsome, for he found
The lot he longed for, his self-chosen doom.
What cause have they to laugh? Heaven, not their crew,
Hath glory by his death. Then let Odysseus
Insult with empty pride. To him and his
Aias is nothing; but to me, to me,
He leaves distress and sorrow in his room!

TEUCER (within). Alas, undone!

[975-1009] LEADER OF CH.
Hush! that was Teucer's cry. Methought I heard
His voice salute this object of dire woe.

Enter TEUCER.

TEU. Aias, dear brother, comfort of mine eye,
Hast thou then done even as the rumour holds?

CH. Be sure of that, Teucer. He lives no more.

TEU. Oh, then how heavy is the lot I bear!

CH. Yes, thou hast cause —

TEU. O rash assault of woe! —

CH. To mourn full loud.

TEU. Ay me! and where, oh where
On Trojan earth, tell me, is this man's child?

CH. Beside the huts, untended.

TEU. (to TEC). Oh, with haste
Go bring him hither, lest some enemy's hand
Snatch him, as from the lion's widowed mate
The lion-whelp is taken. Spare not speed.
All soon combine in mockery o'er the dead.[Exit TECMESSA

CH. Even such commands he left thee ere he died.
As thou fulfillest by this timely care.

TEU. O sorest spectacle mine eyes e'er saw!
Woe for my journey hither, of all ways
Most grievous to my heart, since I was ware,
Dear Aias, of thy doom, and sadly tracked
Thy footsteps. For there darted through the host,
As from some God, a swift report of thee
That thou wert lost in death. I, hapless, heard,
And mourned even then for that whose presence kills me.
Ay me! But come,
Unveil. Let me behold my misery. [The corpse of AIAS is uncovered
O sight unbearable! Cruelly brave!
Dying, what store of griefs thou sow'st for me!
Where, amongst whom of mortals, can I go,
That stood not near thee in thy troublous hour?
Will Telamon, my sire and thine, receive me
With radiant countenance and favouring brow
[1010-1046] Returning without thee? Most like! being one
Who smiles no more, yield Fortune what she may.
Will he hide aught or soften any word,
Rating the bastard of his spear-won thrall,
Whose cowardice and dastardy betrayed
Thy life, dear Aias, — or my murderous guile,
To rob thee of thy lordship and thy home?
Such greeting waits me from the man of wrath,
Whose testy age even without cause would storm.
Last, I shall leave my land a castaway,
Thrust forth an exile, and proclaimed a slave;
So should I fare at home. And here in Troy
My foes are many and my comforts few.

All these things are my portion through thy death.
Woe’s me, my heart! how shall I bear to draw thee,
O thou ill-starr’d! from this discoloured blade,
Thy self-shown slayer? Didst thou then perceive
Dead Hector was at length to be thine end? —
I pray you all, consider these two men.
Hector, whose gift from Aias was a girdle,
Tight-braced therewith to the car’s rim, was dragged
And scarified till he breathed forth his life.
And Aias with this present from his foe
Finds through such means his death-fall and his doom.
Say then what cruel workman forged the gifts,
But Fury this sharp sword, Hell that bright band?
In this, and all things human, I maintain,
Gods are the artificers. My thought is said.
And if there be who cares not for my thought,
Let him hold fast his faith and leave me mine.

CH. Spare longer speech, and think how to secure
Thy brother’s burial, and what plea will serve;
Since one comes here hath no good will to us
And like a villain haply comes in scorn.

TEU. What man of all the host hath caught thine eye?

CH. The cause for whom we sailed, the Spartan King.

TEU. Yes; I discern him, now he moves more near.

[1047-1083]

Enter MENELAUS.

MENELAUS. Fellow, give o’er. Cease tending yon dead man!
Obey my voice, and leave him where he lies.

TEU. Thy potent cause for spending so much breath?

MEN. My will, and his whose word is sovereign here.

TEU. May we not know the reasons of your will?

MEN. Because he, whom we trusted to have brought
To lend us loyal help with heart and hand,
Proved in the trial a worse than Phrygian foe;
Who lay in wait for all the host by night,
And sallied forth in arms to shed our blood;
That, had not one in Heaven foiled this attempt,
Our lot had been to lie as he doth here
Dead and undone for ever, while he lived
And flourished. Heaven hath turned this turbulence
To fall instead upon the harmless flock.
Wherefore no strength of man shall once avail
To encase his body with a seemly tomb,
But outcast on the wide and watery sand,
He'll feed the birds that batten on the shore.
Nor let thy towering spirit therefore rise
In threatening wrath. Wilt thou or not, our hand
Shall rule him dead, howe'er he braved us living,
And that by force; for never would he yield,
Even while he lived, to words from me. And yet
It shows base metal when the subject-wight
Deigns not to hearken to the chief in power.
Since without settled awe, neither in states
Can laws have rightful sway, nor can a host
Be governed with due wisdom, if no fear
Or wholesome shame be there to shield its safety.
And though a man wax great in thews and bulk,
Let him be warned: a trifling harm may ruin him.
Whoever knows respect and honour both
Stands free from risk of dark vicissitude.
But whereso pride and licence have their fling,
Be sure that state will one day lose her course
And founder in the abysm. Let fear have place
[1084-1122] Still where it ought, say I, nor let men think
To do their pleasure and not bide the pain.
That wheel comes surely round. Once Aias flamed
With insolent fierceness. Now I mount in pride,
And loudly bid thee bury him not, lest burying
Thy brother thou be burrowing thine own grave.

CH. Menelaüs, make not thy philosophy

CH. Menelaus, make not thy philosophy
A platform whence to insult the valiant dead.

TEU. I nevermore will marvel, sirs, when one
Of humblest parentage is prone to sin,
Since those reputed men of noble strain
Stoop to such phrase of prating frowardness.
Come, tell it o’er again, — said you ye brought
My brother bound to aid you with his power?
Sailed he not forth of his own sovereign will?
Where is thy voucher of command o’er him?
Where of thy right o’er those that followed him?
Sparta, not we, shall buckle to thy sway.
’Twas written nowhere in the bond of rule
That thou shouldst check him rather than he thee.
Thou sailedst under orders, not in charge
Of all, much less of Aias. Then pursue
Thy limited direction, and chastise,
In haughty phrase, the men who fear thy nod.
But I will bury Aias, whether thou
Or the other general give consent or no.
’Tis not for me to tremble at your word.
Not to reclaim thy wife, like those poor souls
Thou flll’st with labour, issued this man forth,
But caring for his oath, and not for thee,
Or any other nobody. Then come
With heralds all arow, and bring the man
Called king of men with thee! For thy sole noise
I budge not, wert thou twenty times thy name.

CH. The sufferer should not bear a bitter tongue.
Hard words, how just soe’er, will leave their sting.

MEN. Our bowman carries no small pride, I see.

TEU. No mere mechanic’s menial craft is mine.

MEN. How wouldst thou vaunt it hadst thou but a shield!

[1123-1158] TEU. Unarmed I fear not thee in panoply.

MEN. Redoubted is the wrath lives on thy tongue.

TEU. Whose cause is just hath licence to be proud.

MEN. Just, that my murderer have a peaceful end?

TEU. Thy murderer? Strange, to have been slain and live!

MEN. Yea, through Heaven's mercy. By his will, I am dead.

TEU. If Heaven have saved thee, give the Gods their due.

MEN. Am I the man to spurn at Heaven's command?

TEU. Thou dost, to come and frustrate burial.

MEN. Honour forbids to yield my foe a tomb.

TEU. And Aias was thy foeman? Where and when?

MEN. Hate lived between us; that thou know'st full well.

TEU. For thy proved knavery, coining votes i' the court

MEN. The judges voted. He ne'er lost through me.

TEU. Guilt hiding guile wears often fairest front.

MEN. I know whom pain shall harass for that word.

TEU. Not without giving equal pain, 'tis clear.

MEN. No more, but this. No burial for this man!

TEU. Yea, this much more. He shall have instant burial.

MEN. I have seen ere now a man of doughty tongue
Urge sailors in foul weather to unmoor,
Who, caught in the sea-misery by and by,
Lay voiceless, muffled in his cloak, and suffered
Who would of the sailors over trample him
Even so methinks thy truculent mouth ere long
Shall quench its outcry, when this little cloud
Breaks forth on thee with the full tempest's might.

TEU. I too have seen a man whose windy pride
Poured forth loud insults o’er a neighbour’s fall,
Till one whose cause and temper showed like mine
Spake to him in my hearing this plain word:
‘Man, do the dead no wrong; but, if thou dost,
Be sure thou shalt have sorrow.’ Thus he warned
The infatuate one: ay, one whom I behold,
[1158-1185] For all may read my riddle — thou art he.

MEN. I will be gone. ‘Twere shame to me, if known,
To chide when I have power to crush by force.

TEU. Off with you, then! ‘Twere triple shame in me
To list the vain talk of a blustering fool.[Exit MENELAUS

LEADER OF CHORUS.

High the quarrel rears his head!
Haste thee, Teucer, trebly haste,
Grave-room for the valiant dead
Furnish with what speed thou mayst,
Hollowed deep within the ground,
Where beneath his mouldering mound
Aias aye shall be renowned.

Re-enter TECMESSA with EURYSAKES.

TEU. Lo! where the hero’s housemate and his child,
Hitting the moment’s need, appear at hand,
To tend the burial of the ill fated dead.
Come, child, take thou thy station close beside:
Kneel and embrace the author of thy life,
In solemn suppliant fashion holding forth
This lock of thine own hair, and hers, and mine
With threefold consecration, that if one
Of the army force thee from thy father’s corse,
My curse may banish him from holy ground,
Far from his home, unburied, and cut off
From all his race, even as I cut this curl.
There, hold him, child, and guard him; let no hand
Stir thee, but lean to the calm breast and cling.

(To CHORUS) And ye, be not like women in this scene,
Nor let your manhoods falter; stand true men
To this defence, till I return prepared,
Though all cry No, to give him burial.[Exit

CHORUS.

When shall the tale of wandering years be done?I 1
When shall arise our exile's latest sun?
[1186-1125] Oh, where shall end the incessant woe
Of troublous spear-encounter with the foe,
Through this vast Trojan plain,
Of Grecian arms the lamentable stain?

Would he had gone to inhabit the wide sky,I 2
Or that dark home of death where millions lie,
Who taught our Grecian world the way
To use vile swords and knit the dense array!
His toil gave birth to toil
In endless line. He made mankind his spoil.

His tyrant will hath forced me to forgoII 1
The garland, and the goblet's bounteous flow:
Yea, and the flute's dear noise,
And night's more tranquil joys;
Ay me! nor only these,
The fruits of golden ease,
But Love, but Love — O crowning sorrow! —
Hath ceased for me. I may not borrow
Sweet thoughts from him to smooth my dreary bed,
Where dank night-dews fall ever on my head,
Lest once I might forget the sadness of the morrow.

Even here in Troy, Aias was erst my rock,II 2
From darkling fears and 'mid the battle-shock
To screen me with huge might:
Now he is lost in night
And horror. Where again
Shall gladness heal my pain?
O were I where the waters hoary,
Round Sunium's pine-clad promontory

Round Sunium's pine-clad promontory,
Plash underneath the flowery upland height.
Then holiest Athens soon would come in sight,
And to Athena's self I might declare my story.

Enter TEUCER.

TEU. My steps were hastened, brethren, when I saw
Great Agamemnon hitherward afoot.
He means to talk perversely, I can tell.

[1126-1261]

Enter AGAMEMNON.

AG. And so I hear thou'lt stretch thy mouth agape
With big bold words against us undismayed —
Thou, the she-captive's offspring! High would scale
Thy voice, and pert would be thy strutting gait,
Were but thy mother noble; since, being naught,
So stiff thou stand'st for him who is nothing now,
And swear'st we came not as commanders here
Of all the Achaean navy, nor of thee;
But Aias sailed, thou say'st, with absolute right.
Must we endure detraction from a slave?
What was the man thou noisest here so proudly?
Have I not set my foot as firm and far?
Or stood his valour unaccompanied
In all this host? High cause have we to rue
That prize-encounter for Pelides' arms,
Seeing Teucer's sentence stamps our knavery
For all to know it; and nought will serve but ye,
Being vanquished, kick at the award that passed
By voice of the majority in the court,
And either pelt us with rude calumnies,
Or stab at us, ye laggards! with base guile.
Howbeit, these ways will never help to build
The wholesome order of established law,
If men shall hustle victors from their right,
And mix the hindmost rabble with the van.
That craves repression. Not by bulky size,

Or shoulders' breadth, the perfect man is known;
But wisdom gives chief power in all the world.
The ox hath a huge broadside, yet is held
Right in the furrow by a slender goad;
Which remedy, I perceive, will pass ere long
To visit thee, unless thy wisdom grow;
Who hast uttered forth such daring insolence
For the pale shadow of a vanished man.
Learn modestly to know thy place and birth,
And bring with thee some freeborn advocate
To plead thy cause before us in thy room.
[1262-1300] I understand not in the barbarous tongue,
And all thy talk sounds nonsense to mine ear.

CH. Would ye might both have sense to curb your ire!
No better hope for either can I frame.

TEU. Fie! How doth gratitude when men are dead
Prove renegade and swiftly pass away!
This Agamemnon hath no slightest word
Of kind remembrance any more for thee,
Aias, who oftentimes for his behoof
Hast jeoparded thy life in labour of war.
Now all is clean forgotten and out of mind.
Thou who hast multiplied words void of sense,
Hast thou no faintest memory of the time
When who but Aias came and rescued you
Already locked within the toils, — all lost,
The rout began: when close abaft the ships
The torches flared, and o'er the bootless trench
Hector was bounding high to board our fleet?
Who stayed that onset? Was not Aias he?
Whom thou deny'st to have once set foot by thine.
Find ye no merit there? And once again
When he met Hector singly, man to man,
Not by your bidding, but the lottery's choice,
His lot, that skulked not low adown i' the heap,
A moist earth-clod, but sure to spring in air,
And first to clear the plumy helmet's brim.

Yes, Aias was the man, and I too there
Kept rank, the ‘barbarous mother’s servile son.’
I pity thee the blindness of that word.
Who was thy father’s father? A barbarian,
Pelops, the Phrygian, if you trace him far!
And what was Atreus, thine own father? One
Who served his brother with the abominable
Dire feast of his own flesh. And thou thyself
Cam’st from a Cretan mother, whom her sire
Caught with a man who had no right in her
And gave dumb fishes the polluted prey.
Such was thy race. What is the race thou spurnest?
My father, Telamon, of all the host
Being foremost proved in valour, took as prize
[1301-1337] My mother for his mate: a princess she,
Born of Laomedon; Alcmena’s son
Gave her to grace him — a triumphant meed.
Thus royally descended and thus brave,
Shall I renounce the brother of my blood,
Or suffer thee to thrust him in his woes
Far from all burial, shameless that thou art?
Be sure that, if ye cast him forth, ye’ll cast
Three bodies more beside him in one spot;
For nobler should I find it here to die
In open quarrel for my kinsman’s weal,
Than for thy wife — or Menelaüs’, was ‘t?
Consider then, not my case, but your own.
For if you harm me you will wish some day
To have been a coward rather than dare me.

CH. Hail, Lord Odysseus! thou art come in time
Not to begin, but help to end, a fray.

Enter ODYSSEUS.

OD. What quarrel, sirs? I well perceived from far
The kings high-voicing o’er the valiant dead.

AG. Yea, Lord Odysseus, for our ears are full
Of this man’s violent heart-offending talk.

OD. What words have passed? I cannot blame the man
Who meets foul speech with bitterness of tongue.

AG. My speech was bitter, for his deeds were foul.

OD. What deed of his could harm thy sovereign head?

AG. He boldly says this corse shall not be left
Unburied, but he'll bury it in our spite.

OD. May I then speak true counsel to my friend,
And pull with thee in policy as of yore?

AG. Speak. I were else a madman; for no friend
Of all the Argeians do I count thy peer.

OD. Then hear me in Heaven's name! Be not so hard
Thus without ruth tombless to cast him forth;
Nor be so vanquished by a vehement will,
That to thy hate even Justice' self must bow.
I, too, had him for my worst enemy,
Since I gained mastery o'er Pelides' arms.
[1338-1373] But though he used me so, I ne'er will grudge
For his proud scorn to yield him thus much honour,
That, save Achilles' self, I have not seen
So noble an Argive on the fields of Troy.
Then 'twere not just in thee to slight him now;
Nor would thy treatment wound him, but confound
The laws of Heaven. No hatred should have scope
To offend the noble spirits of the dead.

AG. Wilt thou thus fight against me on his side?

OD. Yea, though I hated him, while hate was comely.

AG. Why, thou shouldst trample him the more, being dead.

OD. Rejoice not, King, in feats that soil thy fame!

AG. 'Tis hard for power to observe each pious rule.

OD. Not hard to grace the good words of a friend.

AG. The ‘noble spirit’ should hearken to command.

OD. No more! ’Tis conquest to be ruled by love.

AG. Remember what he was thou gracest so.

OD. A noisome enemy; but his life was great.

AG. And wilt thou honour such a pestilent corse?

OD. Hatred gives way to magnanimity.

AG. With addle-pated fools.

OD. Full many are found
Friends for an hour, yet bitter in the end.

AG. And wouldst thou have us gentle to such friends?

OD. I would not praise ungentleness in aught.

AG. We shall be known for weaklings through thy counsel.

OD. Not so, but righteous in all Grecian eyes.

AG. Thou bidst me then let bury this dead man?

OD. I urge thee to the course myself shall follow.

AG. Ay, every man for his own line! That holds.

OD. Why not for my own line? What else were natural?

AG. ‘Twill be thy doing then, ne’er owned by me.

OD. Own it or not, the kindness is the same.

AG. Well, for thy sake I’d grant a greater boon;
Then why not this? However, rest assured
That in the grave or out of it, Aias still
Shall have my hatred. Do thou what thou wilt.[Exit

[1374-1407] CH. Whoso would sneer at thy philosophy,
While such thy ways, Odysseus, were a fool.

OD. And now let Teucer know that from this hour
I am more his friend than I was once his foe,
And fain would help him in this burial-rite
And service to his brother, nor would fail
In aught that mortals owe their noblest dead.

TEU. Odysseus, best of men, thine every word
Hath my heart's praise, and my worst thought of thee
Is foiled by thy staunch kindness to the man
Who was thy rancorous foe. Thou wast not keen
To insult in present of his corse, like these,
The insensate general and his brother-king,
Who came with proud intent to cast him forth
Foully debarred from lawful obsequy.
Wherefore may he who rules in yon wide heaven,
And the unforgetting Fury-spirit, and she,
Justice, who crowns the right, so ruin them
With cruellest destruction, even as they
Thought ruthlessly to rob him of his tomb!
For thee, revered Laërtes' lineal seed,
I fear to admit thy hand unto this rite,
Lest we offend the spirit that is gone.
But for the rest, I hail thy proffered aid;
And bring whom else thou wilt, I'll ne'er resent it.
This work shall be my single care; but thou,
Be sure I love thee for thy generous heart.

OD. I had gladly done it; but, since thou declinest,
I bow to thy decision, and depart.[Exit

TEU. Speed we, for the hour grows late:
Some to scoop his earthy cell,
Others by the cauldron wait,
Plenished from the purest well.
Hoist it, comrades, here at hand,
High upon the three-foot stand!
Let the cleansing waters flow;
Brightly flame the fire below!
Others in a stalwart throng
From his chamber bear along

[1408-1419] All the arms he wont to wield
Save alone the mantling shield.
Thou with me thy strength employ,
Lifting this thy father, boy;
Hold his frame with tender heed —
Still the gashed veins darkly bleed.
Who professes here to love him?
Ply your busy cares above him,
Come and labour for the man,
Nobler none since time began,
Aias, while his life-blood ran.

LEADER OF CH. Oft we know not till we see.
Weak is human prophecy.
Judge not, till the hour have taught thee
What the destinies have brought thee.

ANTIGONE

Translated by F. Storr

Though chronologically it is the last of Sophocles' three Theban plays, *Antigone* was written first, before 441 BC, and the narrative picks up where Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes* ends. Before the beginning of the play, two brothers leading opposite sides in Thebes' civil war died fighting each other for the throne. Creon, the new ruler of Thebes, has decided that Eteocles will be honoured and Polyneices will held be in public shame. The rebel brother's body will not be sanctified by holy rites and will lie unburied on the battlefield, as prey for carrion animals like worms and vultures, generally considered the harshest punishment at the time.

At the opening of the play, Antigone and Ismene, the sisters of the dead Polyneices and Eteocles, meet secretly outside the palace gates late at night. Antigone wants to bury Polyneices' body, in defiance of Creon's edict. Ismene refuses to help her, fearing the death penalty, but she is unable to stop Antigone from going to bury her brother herself, causing Antigone to disown her.

Creon enters, along with the Chorus of Theban Elders. He seeks their support in the days to come, and in particular wants them to back his edict regarding the disposal of Polyneices' body. The Chorus of Elders pledges their support. A Sentry enters, fearfully reporting that the body has been buried. A furious Creon orders the Sentry to find the culprit or face death himself. The Sentry leaves and the Chorus sings about honouring the gods, but after a short absence he returns, bringing Antigone with him. The Sentry explains that the watchmen exhumed Polyneices' body and they caught Antigone as she buried him again. Creon questions her after sending the Sentry off, and she does not deny what she has done. She argues unflinchingly with Creon about the morality of the edict and the morality of her actions. Creon becomes furious, and, thinking Ismene must have known of Antigone's plan, seeing her upset, summons the girl. Ismene tries to confess falsely to the crime, wishing to die alongside her sister, but Antigone will not have it. Creon orders that the two women be temporarily imprisoned.

Haemon, Creon's son, enters to pledge allegiance to his father, even though he is engaged to Antigone. He initially seems willing to forsake Antigone, but when Haemon gently tries to persuade his father to spare Antigone, claiming that 'under cover of darkness the city mourns for the girl', the discussion deteriorates and the two men are soon bitterly insulting each other. Haemon leaves, vowing

never to see Creon again.

Creon decides to spare Ismene and to bury Antigone alive in a cave. She is brought out of the house, and she bewails her fate and defends her actions one last time. She is taken away to her living tomb, with the Chorus expressing great sorrow for what is going to happen to her. Tiresias, the blind prophet, enters. He warns Creon that Polyneices should now be urgently buried because the gods are displeased, refusing to accept any sacrifices or prayers from Thebes. Creon accuses Tiresias of being corrupt. Tiresias responds that because of Creon's mistakes, he will lose "a son of [his] own loins"[2] for the crimes of leaving Polyneices unburied and putting Antigone into the earth (he does not say that Antigone should not be condemned to death, only that it is improper to keep a living body underneath the earth). All of Greece will despise him, and the sacrificial offerings of Thebes will not be accepted by the gods. The Chorus, terrified, asks Creon to take their advice. He assents, and they tell him that he should free Antigone and bury Polyneices. Creon, shaken, agrees to do it. He leaves with a retinue of men to help him right his previous mistakes. The Chorus delivers a choral ode to the god Dionysus (god of wine and of the theatre; this part is the offering to their patron god), and then a Messenger enters to tell them that Haemon has killed himself. Eurydice, Creon's wife and Haemon's mother, enters and asks the Messenger to tell her everything. The Messenger reports that Haemon and Antigone have both taken their own lives, Antigone by hanging herself, and Haemon by stabbing himself after finding the body, just after Polyneices was buried. Eurydice disappears into the palace.

Creon enters, carrying Haemon's body. He understands that his own actions have caused these events. A Second Messenger arrives to tell Creon and the Chorus that Eurydice has killed herself. With her last breath, she cursed her husband. Creon blames himself for everything that has happened, and, a broken man, he asks his servants to help him inside. The order he valued so much has been protected, and he is still the king, but he has acted against the gods and lost his child and his wife as a result. The Chorus closes by saying that although the gods punish the proud, punishment brings wisdom.

Antigone was written at a time of national fervour. In 441 BC, shortly after the play was released, Sophocles was appointed as one of the ten generals to lead a military expedition against Samos. It is notable that a prominent play in a time of such imperialism contains little political propaganda, no impassioned apostrophe, and few references to Athens. Rather than become distracted with the issues of the time, Antigone remains focused on the characters and themes within the play. It does, however, expose the dangers of the absolute ruler, or tyrant, in the person of Creon, a king to whom few will speak freely and openly

their true opinions, and who therefore makes the grievous error of condemning Antigone, an act which he pitifully regrets in the play's final lines. Athenians, proud of their democratic tradition, would have identified his error in the many lines of dialog which emphasize that the people of Thebes believe he is wrong, but have no voice to tell him so. Athenians would identify the folly of tyranny.

The chorus in *Antigone* departs significantly from the chorus in Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*, the play of which Antigone is a continuation. The chorus in Aeschylus' play is largely supportive of Antigone's decision to bury her brother. Here, the chorus is composed of old men who are largely unwilling to see civil disobedience in a positive light. The chorus also represents a typical difference in Sophocles' plays from those of both Aeschylus and Euripides. A chorus of Aeschylus almost always continues or intensifies the moral nature of the play, while one of Euripides frequently strays far from the main moral theme. The chorus in Antigone lies somewhere in between; it remains within the general moral and the immediate scene, but allows itself to be carried away from the occasion or the initial reason for speaking.

‘Antigone in front of the dead Polyneices’ by Nikiforos Lytras

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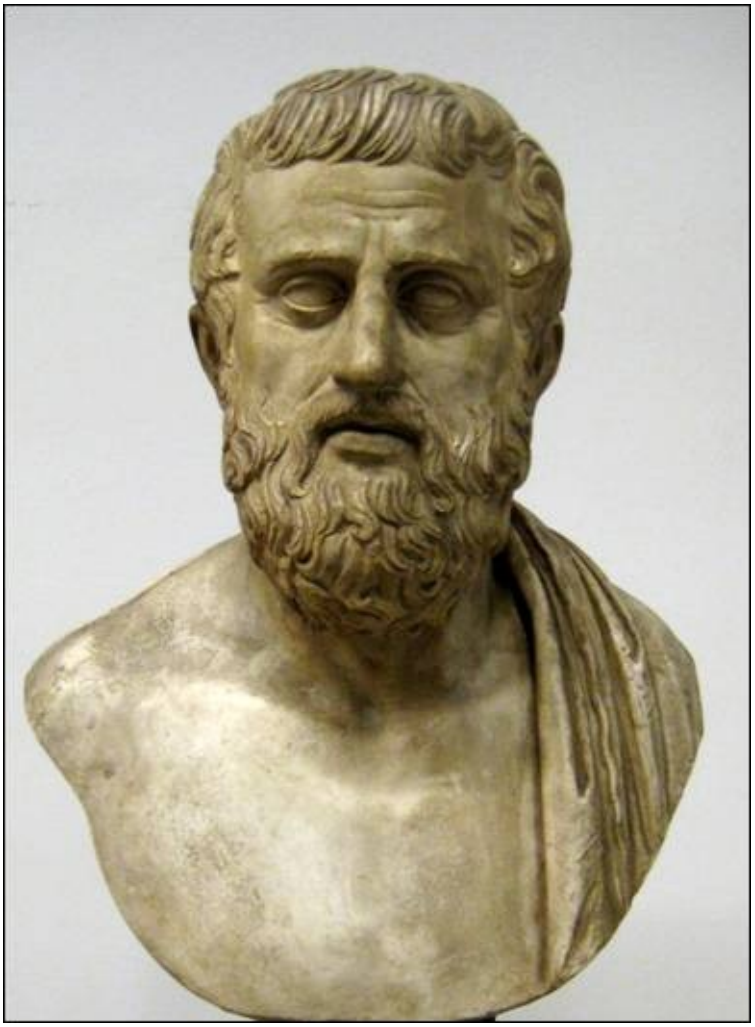

Bust of Sophocles now in the Farnese Collection in the Pushkin Museum

ARGUMENT

Antigone, daughter of Oedipus, the late king of Thebes, in defiance of Creon who rules in his stead, resolves to bury her brother Polyneices, slain in his attack on Thebes. She is caught in the act by Creon's watchmen and brought before the king. She justifies her action, asserting that she was bound to obey the eternal laws of right and wrong in spite of any human ordinance. Creon, unrelenting, condemns her to be immured in a rock-hewn chamber. His son Haemon, to whom Antigone is betrothed, pleads in vain for her life and threatens to die with her. Warned by the seer Teiresias Creon repents him and hurries to release Antigone from her rocky prison. But he is too late: he finds lying side by side Antigone who had hanged herself and Haemon who also has perished by his own hand. Returning to the palace he sees within the dead body of his queen who on learning of her son's death has stabbed herself to the heart.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

ANTIGONE and ISMENE — daughters of Oedipus and sisters of Polyneices and Eteocles.
CREON, King of Thebes.
HAEMON, Son of Creon, betrothed to Antigone.
EURYDICE, wife of Creon.
TEIRESIAS, the prophet.
CHORUS, of Theban elders.
A WATCHMAN
A MESSENGER
A SECOND MESSENGER

ANTIGONE

ANTIGONE and ISMENE before the Palace gates.

ANTIGONE
Ismene, sister of my blood and heart,
See'st thou how Zeus would in our lives fulfill
The weird of Oedipus, a world of woes!
For what of pain, affliction, outrage, shame,
Is lacking in our fortunes, thine and mine?
And now this proclamation of today
Made by our Captain-General to the State,
What can its purport be? Didst hear and heed,
Or art thou deaf when friends are banned as foes?

ISMENE
To me, Antigone, no word of friends
Has come, or glad or grievous, since we twain
Were reft of our two brethren in one day
By double fratricide; and since i' the night
Our Argive leaguers fled, no later news
Has reached me, to inspirit or deject.

ANTIGONE
I know 'twas so, and therefore summoned thee
Beyond the gates to breathe it in thine ear.

ISMENE
What is it? Some dark secret stirs thy breast.

ANTIGONE
What but the thought of our two brothers dead,
The one by Creon graced with funeral rites,
The other disappointed? Eteocles
He hath consigned to earth (as fame reports)
With obsequies that use and wont ordain,
So gracing him among the dead below.
But Polyneices, a dishonored corse,

(So by report the royal edict runs)
No man may bury him or make lament —
Must leave him tombless and unwept, a feast
For kites to scent afar and swoop upon.
Such is the edict (if report speak true)
Of Creon, our most noble Creon, aimed
At thee and me, aye me too; and anon
He will be here to promulgate, for such
As have not heard, his mandate; ’tis in sooth
No passing humor, for the edict says
Whoe’er transgresses shall be stoned to death.
So stands it with us; now ’tis thine to show
If thou art worthy of thy blood or base.

ISMENE
But how, my rash, fond sister, in such case
Can I do anything to make or mar?

ANTIGONE
Say, wilt thou aid me and abet? Decide.

ISMENE
In what bold venture? What is in thy thought?

ANTIGONE
Lend me a hand to bear the corpse away.

ISMENE
What, bury him despite the interdict?

ANTIGONE
My brother, and, though thou deny him, thine
No man shall say that *I* betrayed a brother.

ISMENE
Wilt thou persist, though Creon has forbid?

ANTIGONE
What right has he to keep me from my own?

ISMENE

Bethink thee, sister, of our father's fate,
Abhorred, dishonored, self-convinced of sin,
Blinded, himself his executioner.
Think of his mother-wife (ill sorted names)
Done by a noose herself had twined to death
And last, our hapless brethren in one day,
Both in a mutual destiny involved,
Self-slaughtered, both the slayer and the slain.
Bethink thee, sister, we are left alone;
Shall we not perish wretchedest of all,
If in defiance of the law we cross
A monarch's will? — weak women, think of that,
Not framed by nature to contend with men.
Remember this too that the stronger rules;
We must obey his orders, these or worse.
Therefore I plead compulsion and entreat
The dead to pardon. I perforce obey
The powers that be. 'Tis foolishness, I ween,
To overstep in aught the golden mean.

ANTIGONE
I urge no more; nay, wert thou willing still,
I would not welcome such a fellowship.
Go thine own way; myself will bury him.
How sweet to die in such employ, to rest, —
Sister and brother linked in love's embrace —
A sinless sinner, banned awhile on earth,
But by the dead commended; and with them
I shall abide for ever. As for thee,
Scorn, if thou wilt, the eternal laws of Heaven.

ISMENE
I scorn them not, but to defy the State
Or break her ordinance I have no skill.

ANTIGONE
A specious pretext. I will go alone
To lap my dearest brother in the grave.

ISMENE

My poor, fond sister, how I fear for thee!

ANTIGONE
O waste no fears on me; look to thyself.

ISMENE
At least let no man know of thine intent,
But keep it close and secret, as will I.

ANTIGONE
O tell it, sister; I shall hate thee more
If thou proclaim it not to all the town.

ISMENE
Thou hast a fiery soul for numbing work.

ANTIGONE
I pleasure those whom I would liefest please.

ISMENE
If thou succeed; but thou art doomed to fail.

ANTIGONE
When strength shall fail me, yes, but not before.

ISMENE
But, if the venture’s hopeless, why essay?

ANTIGONE
Sister, forbear, or I shall hate thee soon,
And the dead man will hate thee too, with cause.
Say I am mad and give my madness rein
To wreck itself; the worst that can befall
Is but to die an honorable death.

ISMENE
Have thine own way then; ’tis a mad endeavor,
Yet to thy lovers thou art dear as ever.
[Exeunt]

CHORUS
(Str. 1)

Sunbeam, of all that ever dawn upon
Our seven-gated Thebes the brightest ray,
O eye of golden day,
How fair thy light o'er Dirce's fountain shone,
Speeding upon their headlong homeward course,
Far quicker than they came, the Argive force;
Putting to flight
The argent shields, the host with scutcheons white.
Against our land the proud invader came
To vindicate fell Polyneices' claim.
Like to an eagle swooping low,
On pinions white as new fall'n snow.
With clanging scream, a horsetail plume his crest,
The aspiring lord of Argos onward pressed.

(Ant. 1)
Hovering around our city walls he waits,
His spearmen raven at our seven gates.
But ere a torch our crown of towers could burn,
Ere they had tasted of our blood, they turn
Forced by the Dragon; in their rear
The din of Ares panic-struck they hear.
For Zeus who hates the braggart's boast
Beheld that gold-bespangled host;
As at the goal the paean they upraise,
He struck them with his forked lightning blaze.

(Str. 2)
To earthy from earth rebounding, down he crashed;
The fire-brand from his impious hand was dashed,
As like a Bacchic reveler on he came,
Outbreathing hate and flame,
And tottered. Elsewhere in the field,
Here, there, great Area like a war-horse wheeled;
Beneath his car down thrust
Our foemen bit the dust.

Seven captains at our seven gates
Thundered; for each a champion waits,
Each left behind his armor bright,

Trophy for Zeus who turns the fight;
Save two alone, that ill-starred pair
One mother to one father bare,
Who lance in rest, one ‘gainst the other
Drave, and both perished, brother slain by brother.

(Ant. 2)
Now Victory to Thebes returns again
And smiles upon her chariot-circled plain.
Now let feast and festal should
Memories of war blot out.
Let us to the temples throng,
Dance and sing the live night long.
God of Thebes, lead thou the round.
Bacchus, shaker of the ground!
Let us end our revels here;
Lo! Creon our new lord draws near,
Crowned by this strange chance, our king.
What, I marvel, pondering?
Why this summons? Wherefore call
Us, his elders, one and all,
Bidding us with him debate,
On some grave concern of State?
[Enter CREON]

CREON
Elders, the gods have righted one again
Our storm-tossed ship of state, now safe in port.
But you by special summons I convened
As my most trusted councilors; first, because
I knew you loyal to Laius of old;
Again, when Oedipus restored our State,
Both while he ruled and when his rule was o’er,
Ye still were constant to the royal line.
Now that his two sons perished in one day,
Brother by brother murderously slain,
By right of kinship to the Princes dead,
I claim and hold the throne and sovereignty.
Yet ’tis no easy matter to discern

The temper of a man, his mind and will,
Till he be proved by exercise of power;
And in my case, if one who reigns supreme
Swerve from the highest policy, tongue-tied
By fear of consequence, that man I hold,
And ever held, the basest of the base.
And I contemn the man who sets his friend
Before his country. For myself, I call
To witness Zeus, whose eyes are everywhere,
If I perceive some mischievous design
To sap the State, I will not hold my tongue;
Nor would I reckon as my private friend
A public foe, well knowing that the State
Is the good ship that holds our fortunes all:
Farewell to friendship, if she suffers wreck.
Such is the policy by which I seek
To serve the Commons and conformably
I have proclaimed an edict as concerns
The sons of Oedipus; Eteocles
Who in his country's battle fought and fell,
The foremost champion — duly bury him
With all observances and ceremonies
That are the guerdon of the heroic dead.
But for the miscreant exile who returned
Minded in flames and ashes to blot out
His father's city and his father's gods,
And glut his vengeance with his kinsmen's blood,
Or drag them captive at his chariot wheels —
For Polyneices 'tis ordained that none
Shall give him burial or make mourn for him,
But leave his corpse unburied, to be meat
For dogs and carrion crows, a ghastly sight.
So am I purposed; never by my will
Shall miscreants take precedence of true men,
But all good patriots, alive or dead,
Shall be by me preferred and honored.

CHORUS
Son of Menoeceus, thus thou will'st to deal

With him who loathed and him who loved our State.
Thy word is law; thou canst dispose of us
The living, as thou will'st, as of the dead.

CREON
See then ye execute what I ordain.

CHORUS
On younger shoulders lay this grievous charge.

CREON
Fear not, I've posted guards to watch the corpse.

CHORUS
What further duty would'st thou lay on us?

CREON
Not to connive at disobedience.

CHORUS
No man is mad enough to court his death.

CREON
The penalty *is* death: yet hope of gain
Hath lured men to their ruin oftentimes.
[Enter GUARD]

GUARD
My lord, I will not make pretense to pant
And puff as some light-footed messenger.
In sooth my soul beneath its pack of thought
Made many a halt and turned and turned again;
For conscience plied her spur and curb by turns.
"Why hurry headlong to thy fate, poor fool?"
She whispered. Then again, "If Creon learn
This from another, thou wilt rue it worse."
Thus leisurely I hastened on my road;
Much thought extends a furlong to a league.
But in the end the forward voice prevailed,
To face thee. I will speak though I say nothing.
For plucking courage from despair methought,

‘Let the worst hap, thou canst but meet thy fate.’

CREON
What is thy news? Why this despondency?

GUARD
Let me premise a word about myself?
I neither did the deed nor saw it done,
Nor were it just that I should come to harm.

CREON
Thou art good at parry, and canst fence about
Some matter of grave import, as is plain.

GUARD
The bearer of dread tidings needs must quake.

CREON
Then, sirrah, shoot thy bolt and get thee gone.

GUARD
Well, it must out; the corpse is buried; someone
E’en now besprinkled it with thirsty dust,
Performed the proper ritual — and was gone.

CREON
What say’st thou? Who hath dared to do this thing?

GUARD
I cannot tell, for there was ne’er a trace
Of pick or mattock — hard unbroken ground,
Without a scratch or rut of chariot wheels,
No sign that human hands had been at work.
When the first sentry of the morning watch
Gave the alarm, we all were terror-stricken.
The corpse had vanished, not interred in earth,
But strewn with dust, as if by one who sought
To avert the curse that haunts the unburied dead:
Of hound or ravening jackal, not a sign.
Thereat arose an angry war of words;
Guard railed at guard and blows were like to end it,

For none was there to part us, each in turn
Suspected, but the guilt brought home to none,
From lack of evidence. We challenged each
The ordeal, or to handle red-hot iron,
Or pass through fire, affirming on our oath
Our innocence — we neither did the deed
Ourselves, nor know who did or compassed it.
Our quest was at a standstill, when one spake
And bowed us all to earth like quivering reeds,
For there was no gainsaying him nor way
To escape perdition: *Ye*are*bound*to*tell*
*The*King,*ye*cannot*hide*it; so he spake.
And he convinced us all; so lots were cast,
And I, unlucky scapegoat, drew the prize.
So here I am unwilling and withal
Unwelcome; no man cares to hear ill news.

CHORUS
I had misgivings from the first, my liege,
Of something more than natural at work.

CREON
O cease, you vex me with your babblement;
I am like to think you dote in your old age.
Is it not arrant folly to pretend
That gods would have a thought for this dead man?
Did they forsooth award him special grace,
And as some benefactor bury him,
Who came to fire their hallowed sanctuaries,
To sack their shrines, to desolate their land,
And scout their ordinances? Or perchance
The gods bestow their favors on the bad.
No! no! I have long noted malcontents
Who wagged their heads, and kicked against the yoke,
Misliking these my orders, and my rule.
’Tis they, I warrant, who suborned my guards
By bribes. Of evils current upon earth
The worst is money. Money ’tis that sacks
Cities, and drives men forth from hearth and home;

Warps and seduces native innocence,
And breeds a habit of dishonesty.
But they who sold themselves shall find their greed
Out-shot the mark, and rue it soon or late.
Yea, as I still revere the dread of Zeus,
By Zeus I swear, except ye find and bring
Before my presence here the very man
Who carried out this lawless burial,
Death for your punishment shall not suffice.
Hanged on a cross, alive ye first shall make
Confession of this outrage. This will teach you
What practices are like to serve your turn.
There are some villainies that bring no gain.
For by dishonesty the few may thrive,
The many come to ruin and disgrace.

GUARD
May I not speak, or must I turn and go
Without a word? —

CREON
Begone! canst thou not see
That e'en this question irks me?

GUARD
Where, my lord?
Is it thy ears that suffer, or thy heart?

CREON
Why seek to probe and find the seat of pain?

GUARD
I gall thine ears — this miscreant thy mind.

CREON
What an inveterate babbler! get thee gone!

GUARD
Babbler perchance, but innocent of the crime.

CREON

Twice guilty, having sold thy soul for gain.

GUARD
Alas! how sad when reasoners reason wrong.

CREON
Go, quibble with thy reason. If thou fail'st
To find these malefactors, thou shalt own
The wages of ill-gotten gains is death.
[Exit CREON]

GUARD
I pray he may be found. But caught or not
(And fortune must determine that) thou never
Shalt see me here returning; that is sure.
For past all hope or thought I have escaped,
And for my safety owe the gods much thanks.

CHORUS
(Str. 1)
Many wonders there be, but naught more wondrous than man;
Over the surging sea, with a whitening south wind wan,
Through the foam of the firth, man makes his perilous way;
And the eldest of deities Earth that knows not toil nor decay
Ever he furrows and scores, as his team, year in year out,
With breed of the yoked horse, the ploughshare turneth about.

(Ant. 1)
The light-witted birds of the air, the beasts of the weald and the wood
He traps with his woven snare, and the brood of the briny flood.
Master of cunning he: the savage bull, and the hart
Who roams the mountain free, are tamed by his infinite art;
And the shaggy rough-maned steed is broken to bear the bit.

(Str. 2)
Speech and the wind-swift speed of counsel and civic wit,
He hath learnt for himself all these; and the arrowy rain to fly
And the nipping airs that freeze, 'neath the open winter sky.
He hath provision for all: fell plague he hath learnt to endure;
Safe whate'er may befall: yet for death he hath found no cure.

(Ant. 2)
Passing the wildest flight thought are the cunning and skill,
That guide man now to the light, but now to counsels of ill.
If he honors the laws of the land, and reveres the Gods of the State
Proudly his city shall stand; but a cityless outcast I rate
Whoso bold in his pride from the path of right doth depart;
Ne'er may I sit by his side, or share the thoughts of his heart.

What strange vision meets my eyes,
Fills me with a wild surprise?
Sure I know her, sure 'tis she,
The maid Antigone.
Hapless child of hapless sire,
Didst thou recklessly conspire,
Madly brave the King's decree?
Therefore are they haling thee?

[Enter GUARD bringing ANTIGONE]

GUARD
Here is the culprit taken in the act
Of giving burial. But where's the King?

CHORUS
There from the palace he returns in time.
[Enter CREON]

CREON
Why is my presence timely? What has chanced?

GUARD
No man, my lord, should make a vow, for if
He ever swears he will not do a thing,
His afterthoughts belie his first resolve.
When from the hail-storm of thy threats I fled
I sware thou wouldst not see me here again;
But the wild rapture of a glad surprise
Intoxicates, and so I'm here forsworn.
And here's my prisoner, caught in the very act,
Decking the grave. No lottery this time;
This prize is mine by right of treasure-trove.

So take her, judge her, rack her, if thou wilt.
She's thine, my liege; but I may rightly claim
Hence to depart well quit of all these ills.

CREON
Say, how didst thou arrest the maid, and where?

GUARD
Burying the man. There's nothing more to tell.

CREON
Hast thou thy wits? Or know'st thou what thou say'st?

GUARD
I saw this woman burying the corpse
Against thy orders. Is that clear and plain?

CREON
But how was she surprised and caught in the act?

GUARD
It happened thus. No sooner had we come,
Driven from thy presence by those awful threats,
Than straight we swept away all trace of dust,
And bared the clammy body. Then we sat
High on the ridge to windward of the stench,
While each man kept he fellow alert and rated
Roundly the sluggard if he chanced to nap.
So all night long we watched, until the sun
Stood high in heaven, and his blazing beams
Smote us. A sudden whirlwind then upraised
A cloud of dust that blotted out the sky,
And swept the plain, and stripped the woodlands bare,
And shook the firmament. We closed our eyes
And waited till the heaven-sent plague should pass.
At last it ceased, and lo! there stood this maid.
A piercing cry she uttered, sad and shrill,
As when the mother bird beholds her nest
Robbed of its nestlings; even so the maid
Wailed as she saw the body stripped and bare,

And cursed the ruffians who had done this deed.
Anon she gathered handfuls of dry dust,
Then, holding high a well-wrought brazen urn,
Thrice on the dead she poured a lustral stream.
We at the sight swooped down on her and seized
Our quarry. Undismayed she stood, and when
We taxed her with the former crime and this,
She disowned nothing. I was glad — and grieved;
For 'tis most sweet to 'scape oneself scot-free,
And yet to bring disaster to a friend
Is grievous. Take it all in all, I deem
A man's first duty is to serve himself.

CREON
Speak, girl, with head bent low and downcast eyes,
Does thou plead guilty or deny the deed?

ANTIGONE
Guilty. I did it, I deny it not.

CREON (to GUARD)
Sirrah, begone whither thou wilt, and thank
Thy luck that thou hast 'scaped a heavy charge.
(To ANTIGONE)
Now answer this plain question, yes or no,
Wast thou acquainted with the interdict?

ANTIGONE
I knew, all knew; how should I fail to know?

CREON
And yet wert bold enough to break the law?

ANTIGONE
Yea, for these laws were not ordained of Zeus,
And she who sits enthroned with gods below,
Justice, enacted not these human laws.
Nor did I deem that thou, a mortal man,
Could'st by a breath annul and override
The immutable unwritten laws of Heaven.

They were not born today nor yesterday;
They die not; and none knoweth whence they sprang.
I was not like, who feared no mortal's frown,
To disobey these laws and so provoke
The wrath of Heaven. I knew that I must die,
E'en hadst thou not proclaimed it; and if death
Is thereby hastened, I shall count it gain.
For death is gain to him whose life, like mine,
Is full of misery. Thus my lot appears
Not sad, but blissful; for had I endured
To leave my mother's son unburied there,
I should have grieved with reason, but not now.
And if in this thou judgest me a fool,
Methinks the judge of folly's not acquit.

CHORUS
A stubborn daughter of a stubborn sire,
This ill-starred maiden kicks against the pricks.

CREON
Well, let her know the stubbornest of wills
Are soonest bended, as the hardest iron,
O'erheated in the fire to brittleness,
Flies soonest into fragments, shivered through.
A snaffle curbs the fieriest steed, and he
Who in subjection lives must needs be meek.
But this proud girl, in insolence well-schooled,
First overstepped the established law, and then —
A second and worse act of insolence —
She boasts and glories in her wickedness.
Now if she thus can flout authority
Unpunished, I am woman, she the man.
But though she be my sister's child or nearer
Of kin than all who worship at my hearth,
Nor she nor yet her sister shall escape
The utmost penalty, for both I hold,
As arch-conspirators, of equal guilt.
Bring forth the older; even now I saw her
Within the palace, frenzied and distraught.

The workings of the mind discover oft
Dark deeds in darkness schemed, before the act.
More hateful still the miscreant who seeks
When caught, to make a virtue of a crime.

ANTIGONE
Would'st thou do more than slay thy prisoner?

CREON
Not I, thy life is mine, and that's enough.

ANTIGONE
Why dally then? To me no word of thine
Is pleasant: God forbid it e'er should please;
Nor am I more acceptable to thee.
And yet how otherwise had I achieved
A name so glorious as by burying
A brother? so my townsmen all would say,
Where they not gagged by terror, Manifold
A king's prerogatives, and not the least
That all his acts and all his words are law.

CREON
Of all these Thebans none so deems but thou.

ANTIGONE
These think as I, but bate their breath to thee.

CREON
Hast thou no shame to differ from all these?

ANTIGONE
To reverence kith and kin can bring no shame.

CREON
Was his dead foeman not thy kinsman too?

ANTIGONE
One mother bare them and the self-same sire.

CREON
Why cast a slur on one by honoring one?

ANTIGONE
The dead man will not bear thee out in this.

CREON
Surely, if good and evil fare alive.

ANTIGONE
The slain man was no villain but a brother.

CREON
The patriot perished by the outlaw’s brand.

ANTIGONE
Nathless the realms below these rites require.

CREON
Not that the base should fare as do the brave.

ANTIGONE
Who knows if this world’s crimes are virtues there?

CREON
Not even death can make a foe a friend.

ANTIGONE
My nature is for mutual love, not hate.

CREON
Die then, and love the dead if thou must;
No woman shall be the master while I live.
[Enter ISMENE]

CHORUS
Lo from out the palace gate,
Weeping o’er her sister’s fate,
Comes Ismene; see her brow,
Once serene, beclouded now,
See her beauteous face o’erspread
With a flush of angry red.

CREON
Woman, who like a viper unperceived

Didst harbor in my house and drain my blood,
Two plagues I nurtured blindly, so it proved,
To sap my throne. Say, didst thou too abet
This crime, or dost abjure all privity?

ISMENE
I did the deed, if she will have it so,
And with my sister claim to share the guilt.

ANTIGONE
That were unjust. Thou would'st not act with me
At first, and I refused thy partnership.

ISMENE
But now thy bark is stranded, I am bold
To claim my share as partner in the loss.

ANTIGONE
Who did the deed the under-world knows well:
A friend in word is never friend of mine.

ISMENE
O sister, scorn me not, let me but share
Thy work of piety, and with thee die.

ANTIGONE
Claim not a work in which thou hadst no hand;
One death sufficeth. Wherefore should'st thou die?

ISMENE
What would life profit me bereft of thee?

ANTIGONE
Ask Creon, he's thy kinsman and best friend.

ISMENE
Why taunt me? Find'st thou pleasure in these gibes?

ANTIGONE
'Tis a sad mockery, if indeed I mock.

ISMENE

O say if I can help thee even now.

ANTIGONE
No, save thyself; I grudge not thy escape.

ISMENE
Is e'en this boon denied, to share thy lot?

ANTIGONE
Yea, for thou chosed'st life, and I to die.

ISMENE
Thou canst not say that I did not protest.

ANTIGONE
Well, some approved thy wisdom, others mine.

ISMENE
But now we stand convicted, both alike.

ANTIGONE
Fear not; thou livest, I died long ago
Then when I gave my life to save the dead.

CREON
Both maids, methinks, are crazed. One suddenly
Has lost her wits, the other was born mad.

ISMENE
Yea, so it falls, sire, when misfortune comes,
The wisest even lose their mother wit.

CREON
I' faith thy wit forsook thee when thou mad'st
Thy choice with evil-doers to do ill.

ISMENE
What life for me without my sister here?

CREON
Say not thy sister *here*: thy sister's dead.

ISMENE

What, wilt thou slay thy own son’s plighted bride?

CREON
Aye, let him raise him seed from other fields.

ISMENE
No new espousal can be like the old.

CREON
A plague on trulls who court and woo our sons.

ANTIGONE
O Haemon, how thy sire dishonors thee!

CREON
A plague on thee and thy accursed bride!

CHORUS
What, wilt thou rob thine own son of his bride?

CREON
’Tis death that bars this marriage, not his sire.

CHORUS
So her death-warrant, it would seem, is sealed.

CREON
By you, as first by me; off with them, guards,
And keep them close. Henceforward let them learn
To live as women use, not roam at large.
For e’en the bravest spirits run away
When they perceive death pressing on life’s heels.

CHORUS
(Str. 1)
Thrice blest are they who never tasted pain!
    If once the curse of Heaven attaint a race,
    The infection lingers on and speeds apace,
Age after age, and each the cup must drain.

So when Etesian blasts from Thrace downpour
    Sweep o’er the blackening main and whirl to land

From Ocean’s cavernous depths his ooze and sand,
Billow on billow thunders on the shore.

(Ant. 1)
On the Labdacidae I see descending
Woe upon woe; from days of old some god
Laid on the race a malison, and his rod
Scourges each age with sorrows never ending.

The light that dawned upon its last born son
Is vanished, and the bloody axe of Fate
Has felled the goodly tree that blossomed late.
O Oedipus, by reckless pride undone!

(Str. 2)
Thy might, O Zeus, what mortal power can quell?
Not sleep that lays all else beneath its spell,
Nor moons that never tire: untouched by Time,
Throned in the dazzling light
That crowns Olympus’ height,
Thou reignest King, omnipotent, sublime.

Past, present, and to be,
All bow to thy decree,
All that exceeds the mean by Fate
Is punished, Love or Hate.

(Ant. 2)
Hope flits about never-wearying wings;
Profit to some, to some light loves she brings,
But no man knoweth how her gifts may turn,
Till ‘neath his feet the treacherous ashes burn.
Sure ’twas a sage inspired that spake this word;
If evil good appear
To any, Fate is near;
And brief the respite from her flaming sword.

Hither comes in angry mood
Haemon, latest of thy brood;
Is it for his bride he’s grieved,

Or her marriage-bed deceived,
Doth he make his mourn for thee,
Maid forlorn, Antigone?
[Enter HAEMON]

CREON
Soon shall we know, better than seer can tell.
Learning may fixed decree anent thy bride,
Thou mean'st not, son, to rave against thy sire?
Know'st not whate'er we do is done in love?

HAEMON
O father, I am thine, and I will take
Thy wisdom as the helm to steer withal.
Therefore no wedlock shall by me be held
More precious than thy loving goverance.

CREON
Well spoken: so right-minded sons should feel,
In all deferring to a father's will.
For 'tis the hope of parents they may rear
A brood of sons submissive, keen to avenge
Their father's wrongs, and count his friends their own.
But who begets unprofitable sons,
He verily breeds trouble for himself,
And for his foes much laughter. Son, be warned
And let no woman fool away thy wits.
Ill fares the husband mated with a shrew,
And her embraces very soon wax cold.
For what can wound so surely to the quick
As a false friend? So spue and cast her off,
Bid her go find a husband with the dead.
For since I caught her openly rebelling,
Of all my subjects the one malcontent,
I will not prove a traitor to the State.
She surely dies. Go, let her, if she will,
Appeal to Zeus the God of Kindred, for
If thus I nurse rebellion in my house,
Shall not I foster mutiny without?
For whoso rules his household worthily,

Will prove in civic matters no less wise.
But he who overbears the laws, or thinks
To overrule his rulers, such as one
I never will allow. Whome'er the State
Appoints must be obeyed in everything,
But small and great, just and unjust alike.
I warrant such a one in either case
Would shine, as King or subject; such a man
Would in the storm of battle stand his ground,
A comrade leal and true; but Anarchy —
What evils are not wrought by Anarchy!
She ruins States, and overthrows the home,
She dissipates and routs the embattled host;
While discipline preserves the ordered ranks.
Therefore we must maintain authority
And yield to title to a woman's will.
Better, if needs be, men should cast us out
Than hear it said, a woman proved his match.

CHORUS
To me, unless old age have dulled wits,
Thy words appear both reasonable and wise.

HAEMON
Father, the gods implant in mortal men
Reason, the choicest gift bestowed by heaven.
'Tis not for me to say thou errest, nor
Would I arraign thy wisdom, if I could;
And yet wise thoughts may come to other men
And, as thy son, it falls to me to mark
The acts, the words, the comments of the crowd.
The commons stand in terror of thy frown,
And dare not utter aught that might offend,
But I can overhear their muttered plaints,
Know how the people mourn this maiden doomed
For noblest deeds to die the worst of deaths.
When her own brother slain in battle lay
Unsepulchered, she suffered not his corse
To lie for carrion birds and dogs to maul:

Should not her name (they cry) be writ in gold?
Such the low murmurings that reach my ear.
O father, nothing is by me more prized
Than thy well-being, for what higher good
Can children covet than their sire's fair fame,
As fathers too take pride in glorious sons?
Therefore, my father, cling not to one mood,
And deemed not thou art right, all others wrong.
For whoso thinks that wisdom dwells with him,
That he alone can speak or think aright,
Such oracles are empty breath when tried.
The wisest man will let himself be swayed
By others' wisdom and relax in time.
See how the trees beside a stream in flood
Save, if they yield to force, each spray unharmed,
But by resisting perish root and branch.
The mariner who keeps his mainsheet taut,
And will not slacken in the gale, is like
To sail with thwarts reversed, keel uppermost.
Relent then and repent thee of thy wrath;
For, if one young in years may claim some sense,
I'll say 'tis best of all to be endowed
With absolute wisdom; but, if that's denied,
(And nature takes not readily that ply)
Next wise is he who lists to sage advice.

CHORUS
If he says aught in season, heed him, King.
(To HAEMON)
Heed thou thy sire too; both have spoken well.

CREON
What, would you have us at our age be schooled,
Lessoned in prudence by a beardless boy?

HAEMON
I plead for justice, father, nothing more.
Weigh me upon my merit, not my years.

CREON

Strange merit this to sanction lawlessness!

HAEMON
For evil-doers I would urge no plea.

CREON
Is not this maid an arrant law-breaker?

HAEMON
The Theban commons with one voice say, No.

CREON
What, shall the mob dictate my policy?

HAEMON
’Tis thou, methinks, who speakest like a boy.

CREON
Am I to rule for others, or myself?

HAEMON
A State for one man is no State at all.

CREON
The State is his who rules it, so ’tis held.

HAEMON
As monarch of a desert thou wouldst shine.

CREON
This boy, methinks, maintains the woman’s cause.

HAEMON
If thou be’st woman, yes. My thought’s for thee.

CREON
O reprobate, would’st wrangle with thy sire?

HAEMON
Because I see thee wrongfully perverse.

CREON
And am I wrong, if I maintain my rights?

HAEMON
Talk not of rights; thou spurn’st the due of Heaven

CREON
O heart corrupt, a woman’s minion thou!

HAEMON
Slave to dishonor thou wilt never find me.

CREON
Thy speech at least was all a plea for her.

HAEMON
And thee and me, and for the gods below.

CREON
Living the maid shall never be thy bride.

HAEMON
So she shall die, but one will die with her.

CREON
Hast come to such a pass as threaten me?

HAEMON
What threat is this, vain counsels to reprove?

CREON
Vain fool to instruct thy betters; thou shall rue it.

HAEMON
Wert not my father, I had said thou err’st.

CREON
Play not the spaniel, thou a woman’s slave.

HAEMON
When thou dost speak, must no man make reply?

CREON
This passes bounds. By heaven, thou shalt not rate
And jeer and flout me with impunity.
Off with the hateful thing that she may die

At once, beside her bridegroom, in his sight.

HAEMON
Think not that in my sight the maid shall die,
Or by my side; never shalt thou again
Behold my face hereafter. Go, consort
With friends who like a madman for their mate.
[Exit HAEMON]

CHORUS
Thy son has gone, my liege, in angry haste.
Fell is the wrath of youth beneath a smart.

CREON
Let him go vent his fury like a fiend:
These sisters twain he shall not save from death.

CHORUS
Surely, thou meanest not to slay them both?

CREON
I stand corrected; only her who touched
The body.

CHORUS
And what death is she to die?

CREON
She shall be taken to some desert place
By man untrod, and in a rock-hewn cave,
With food no more than to avoid the taint
That homicide might bring on all the State,
Buried alive. There let her call in aid
The King of Death, the one god she reveres,
Or learn too late a lesson learnt at last:
’Tis labor lost, to reverence the dead.

CHORUS
(Str.)
Love resistless in fight, all yield at a glance of thine eye,
Love who pillowed all night on a maiden’s cheek dost lie,

Over the upland holds. Shall mortals not yield to thee?

(Ant).
Mad are thy subjects all, and even the wisest heart
Straight to folly will fall, at a touch of thy poisoned dart.
Thou didst kindle the strife, this feud of kinsman with kin,
By the eyes of a winsome wife, and the yearning her heart to win.
For as her consort still, enthroned with Justice above,
Thou bendest man to thy will, O all invincible Love.

Lo I myself am borne aside,
From Justice, as I view this bride.
(O sight an eye in tears to drown)
Antigone, so young, so fair,
Thus hurried down
Death's bower with the dead to share.

ANTIGONE
(Str. 1)
Friends, countrymen, my last farewell I make;
My journey's done.
One last fond, lingering, longing look I take
At the bright sun.
For Death who puts to sleep both young and old
Hales my young life,
And beckons me to Acheron's dark fold,
An unwed wife.
No youths have sung the marriage song for me,
My bridal bed
No maids have strewn with flowers from the lea,
'Tis Death I wed.

CHORUS
But bethink thee, thou art sped,
Great and glorious, to the dead.
Thou the sword's edge hast not tasted,
No disease thy frame hath wasted.
Freely thou alone shalt go
Living to the dead below.

ANTIGONE
(Ant. 1)
Nay, but the piteous tale I've heard men tell
Of Tantalus' doomed child,
Chained upon Siphylus' high rocky fell,
That clung like ivy wild,
Drenched by the pelting rain and whirling snow,
Left there to pine,
While on her frozen breast the tears aye flow —
Her fate is mine.

CHORUS
She was sprung of gods, divine,
Mortals we of mortal line.
Like renown with gods to gain
Recompenses all thy pain.
Take this solace to thy tomb
Hers in life and death thy doom.

ANTIGONE
(Str. 2)
Alack, alack! Ye mock me. Is it meet
Thus to insult me living, to my face?
Cease, by our country's altars I entreat,
Ye lordly rulers of a lordly race.
O fount of Dirce, wood-embowered plain
Where Theban chariots to victory speed,
Mark ye the cruel laws that now have wrought my bane,
The friends who show no pity in my need!
Was ever fate like mine? O monstrous doom,
Within a rock-built prison sepulchered,
To fade and wither in a living tomb,
And alien midst the living and the dead.

CHORUS
(Str. 3)
In thy boldness over-rash
Madly thou thy foot didst dash
'Gainst high Justice' altar stair.
Thou a father's guild dost bear.

ANTIGONE
(Ant. 2)
At this thou touchest my most poignant pain,
My ill-starred father's piteous disgrace,
The taint of blood, the hereditary stain,
That clings to all of Labdacus' famed race.
Woe worth the monstrous marriage-bed where lay
A mother with the son her womb had borne,
Therein I was conceived, woe worth the day,
Fruit of incestuous sheets, a maid forlorn,
And now I pass, accursed and unwed,
To meet them as an alien there below;
And thee, O brother, in marriage ill-bestead,
'Twas thy dead hand that dealt me this death-blow.

CHORUS
Religion has her chains, 'tis true,
Let rite be paid when rites are due.
Yet is it ill to disobey
The powers who hold by might the sway.
Thou hast withstood authority,
A self-willed rebel, thou must die.

ANTIGONE
Unwept, unwed, unfriended, hence I go,
No longer may I see the day's bright eye;
Not one friend left to share my bitter woe,
And o'er my ashes heave one passing sigh.

CREON
If wail and lamentation aught availed
To stave off death, I trow they'd never end.
Away with her, and having walled her up
In a rock-vaulted tomb, as I ordained,
Leave her alone at liberty to die,
Or, if she choose, to live in solitude,
The tomb her dwelling. We in either case
Are guiltless as concerns this maiden's blood,
Only on earth no lodging shall she find.

ANTIGONE
O grave, O bridal bower, O prison house
Hewn from the rock, my everlasting home,
Whither I go to join the mighty host
Of kinsfolk, Persephassa's guests long dead,
The last of all, of all more miserable,
I pass, my destined span of years cut short.
And yet good hope is mine that I shall find
A welcome from my sire, a welcome too,
From thee, my mother, and my brother dear;
From with these hands, I laved and decked your limbs
In death, and poured libations on your grave.
And last, my Polyneices, unto thee
I paid due rites, and this my recompense!
Yet am I justified in wisdom's eyes.
For even had it been some child of mine,
Or husband mouldering in death's decay,
I had not wrought this deed despite the State.
What is the law I call in aid? 'Tis thus
I argue. Had it been a husband dead
I might have wed another, and have borne
Another child, to take the dead child's place.
But, now my sire and mother both are dead,
No second brother can be born for me.
Thus by the law of conscience I was led
To honor thee, dear brother, and was judged
By Creon guilty of a heinous crime.
And now he drags me like a criminal,
A bride unwed, amerced of marriage-song
And marriage-bed and joys of motherhood,
By friends deserted to a living grave.
What ordinance of heaven have I transgressed?
Hereafter can I look to any god
For succor, call on any man for help?
Alas, my piety is impious deemed.
Well, if such justice is approved of heaven,
I shall be taught by suffering my sin;
But if the sin is theirs, O may they suffer
No worse ills than the wrongs they do to me.

CHORUS
The same ungovernable will
Drives like a gale the maiden still.

CREON
Therefore, my guards who let her stay
Shall smart full sore for their delay.

ANTIGONE
Ah, woe is me! This word I hear
Brings death most near.

CHORUS
I have no comfort. What he saith,
Portends no other thing than death.

ANTIGONE
My fatherland, city of Thebes divine,
Ye gods of Thebes whence sprang my line,
Look, puissant lords of Thebes, on me;
The last of all your royal house ye see.
Martyred by men of sin, undone.
Such meed my piety hath won.
[Exit ANTIGONE]

CHORUS
(Str. 1)
Like to thee that maiden bright,
   Danae, in her brass-bound tower,
Once exchanged the glad sunlight
   For a cell, her bridal bower.
And yet she sprang of royal line,
   My child, like thine,
   And nursed the seed
   By her conceived
Of Zeus descending in a golden shower.
Strange are the ways of Fate, her power
Nor wealth, nor arms withstand, nor tower;
Nor brass-prowed ships, that breast the sea
   From Fate can flee.

(Ant. 1)
Thus Dryas' child, the rash Edonian King,
For words of high disdain
Did Bacchus to a rocky dungeon bring,
To cool the madness of a fevered brain.
   His frenzy passed,
   He learnt at last
'Twas madness gibes against a god to fling.
For once he fain had quenched the Maenad's fire;
And of the tuneful Nine provoked the ire.

(Str. 2)
By the Iron Rocks that guard the double main,
   On Bosporus' lone strand,
Where stretcheth Salmydessus' plain
   In the wild Thracian land,
There on his borders Ares witnessed
   The vengeance by a jealous step-dame ta'en
The gore that trickled from a spindle red,
   The sightless orbits of her step-sons twain.

(Ant. 2)
Wasting away they mourned their piteous doom,
The blasted issue of their mother's womb.
But she her lineage could trace
   To great Erecththeus' race;
Daughter of Boreas in her sire's vast caves
   Reared, where the tempest raves,
Swift as his horses o'er the hills she sped;
A child of gods; yet she, my child, like thee,
   By Destiny
That knows not death nor age — she too was vanquished.
[Enter TEIRESIAS and BOY]

TEIRESIAS
Princes of Thebes, two wayfarers as one,
Having betwixt us eyes for one, we are here.
The blind man cannot move without a guide.

CREON

Why tidings, old Teiresias?

TEIRESIAS
I will tell thee;
And when thou hearest thou must heed the seer.

CREON
Thus far I ne'er have disobeyed thy rede.

TEIRESIAS
So hast thou steered the ship of State aright.

CREON
I know it, and I gladly own my debt.

TEIRESIAS
Bethink thee that thou treadest once again
The razor edge of peril.

CREON
What is this?
Thy words inspire a dread presentiment.

TEIRESIAS
The divination of my arts shall tell.
Sitting upon my throne of augury,
As is my wont, where every fowl of heaven
Find harborage, upon mine ears was borne
A jargon strange of twitterings, hoots, and screams;
So knew I that each bird at the other tare
With bloody talons, for the whirr of wings
Could signify naught else. Perturbed in soul,
I straight essayed the sacrifice by fire
On blazing altars, but the God of Fire
Came not in flame, and from the thigh bones dripped
And sputtered in the ashes a foul ooze;
Gall-bladders cracked and spurted up: the fat
Melted and fell and left the thigh bones bare.
Such are the signs, taught by this lad, I read —
As I guide others, so the boy guides me —
The frustrate signs of oracles grown dumb.

O King, thy willful temper ails the State,
For all our shrines and altars are profaned
By what has filled the maw of dogs and crows,
The flesh of Oedipus' unburied son.
Therefore the angry gods abominate
Our litanies and our burnt offerings;
Therefore no birds trill out a happy note,
Gorged with the carnival of human gore.
O ponder this, my son. To err is common
To all men, but the man who having erred
Hugs not his errors, but repents and seeks
The cure, is not a wastrel nor unwise.
No fool, the saw goes, like the obstinate fool.
Let death disarm thy vengeance. O forbear
To vex the dead. What glory wilt thou win
By slaying twice the slain? I mean thee well;
Counsel's most welcome if I promise gain.

CREON
Old man, ye all let fly at me your shafts
Like anchors at a target; yea, ye set
Your soothsayer on me. Peddlers are ye all
And I the merchandise ye buy and sell.
Go to, and make your profit where ye will,
Silver of Sardis change for gold of Ind;
Ye will not purchase this man's burial,
Not though the winged ministers of Zeus
Should bear him in their talons to his throne;
Not e'en in awe of prodigy so dire
Would I permit his burial, for I know
No human soilure can assail the gods;
This too I know, Teiresias, dire's the fall
Of craft and cunning when it tries to gloss
Foul treachery with fair words for filthy gain.

TEIRESIAS
Alas! doth any know and lay to heart —

CREON
Is this the prelude to some hackneyed saw?

TEIRESIAS
How far good counsel is the best of goods?

CREON
True, as unwisdom is the worst of ills.

TEIRESIAS
Thou art infected with that ill thyself.

CREON
I will not bandy insults with thee, seer.

TEIRESIAS
And yet thou say’st my prophesies are frauds.

CREON
Prophets are all a money-getting tribe.

TEIRESIAS
And kings are all a lucre-loving race.

CREON
Dost know at whom thou glancest, me thy lord?

TEIRESIAS
Lord of the State and savior, thanks to me.

CREON
Skilled prophet art thou, but to wrong inclined.

TEIRESIAS
Take heed, thou wilt provoke me to reveal
The mystery deep hidden in my breast.

CREON
Say on, but see it be not said for gain.

TEIRESIAS
Such thou, methinks, till now hast judged my words.

CREON
Be sure thou wilt not traffic on my wits.

TEIRESIAS
Know then for sure, the coursers of the sun
Not many times shall run their race, before
Thou shalt have given the fruit of thine own loins
In quittance of thy murder, life for life;
For that thou hast entombed a living soul,
And sent below a denizen of earth,
And wronged the nether gods by leaving here
A corpse unlaved, unwept, unsepulchered.
Herein thou hast no part, nor e'en the gods
In heaven; and thou usurp'st a power not thine.
For this the avenging spirits of Heaven and Hell
Who dog the steps of sin are on thy trail:
What these have suffered thou shalt suffer too.
And now, consider whether bought by gold
I prophesy. For, yet a little while,
And sound of lamentation shall be heard,
Of men and women through thy desolate halls;
And all thy neighbor States are leagues to avenge
Their mangled warriors who have found a grave
I' the maw of wolf or hound, or winged bird
That flying homewards taints their city's air.
These are the shafts, that like a bowman I
Provoked to anger, loosen at thy breast,
Unerring, and their smart thou shalt not shun.
Boy, lead me home, that he may vent his spleen
On younger men, and learn to curb his tongue
With gentler manners than his present mood.
[Exit TEIRESIAS]

CHORUS
My liege, that man hath gone, foretelling woe.
And, O believe me, since these grizzled locks
Were like the raven, never have I known
The prophet's warning to the State to fail.

CREON
I know it too, and it perplexes me.
To yield is grievous, but the obstinate soul

That fights with Fate, is smitten grievously.

CHORUS
Son of Menoeceus, list to good advice.

CHORUS
What should I do. Advise me. I will heed.

CHORUS
Go, free the maiden from her rocky cell;
And for the unburied outlaw build a tomb.

CREON
Is that your counsel? You would have me yield?

CHORUS
Yea, king, this instant. Vengeance of the gods
Is swift to overtake the impenitent.

CREON
Ah! what a wrench it is to sacrifice
My heart's resolve; but Fate is ill to fight.

CHORUS
Go, trust not others. Do it quick thyself.

CREON
I go hot-foot. Bestir ye one and all,
My henchmen! Get ye axes! Speed away
To yonder eminence! I too will go,
For all my resolution this way sways.
'Twas I that bound, I too will set her free.
Almost I am persuaded it is best
To keep through life the law ordained of old.
[Exit CREON]

CHORUS
(Str. 1)
Thou by many names adored,
    Child of Zeus the God of thunder,
    Of a Theban bride the wonder,

Fair Italia’s guardian lord;

In the deep-embosomed glades
Of the Eleusinian Queen
Haunt of revelers, men and maids,
Dionysus, thou art seen.

Where Ismenus rolls his waters,
Where the Dragon’s teeth were sown,
Where the Bacchanals thy daughters
Round thee roam,
There thy home;
Thebes, O Bacchus, is thine own.

(Ant. 1)
Thee on the two-crested rock
Lurid-flaming torches see;
Where Corisian maidens flock,
Thee the springs of Castaly.

By Nysa’s bastion ivy-clad,
By shores with clustered vineyards glad,
There to thee the hymn rings out,
And through our streets we Thebans shout,
All hall to thee
Evoe, Evoe!

(Str. 2)
Oh, as thou lov’st this city best of all,
To thee, and to thy Mother levin-stricken,
In our dire need we call;
Thou see’st with what a plague our townsfolk sicken.
Thy ready help we crave,
Whether adown Parnassian heights descending,
Or o’er the roaring straits thy swift was wending,
Save us, O save!

(Ant. 2)
Brightest of all the orbs that breathe forth light,
Authentic son of Zeus, immortal king,

Leader of all the voices of the night,
Come, and thy train of Thyiads with thee bring,
Thy maddened rout
Who dance before thee all night long, and shout,
Thy handmaids we,
Evoe, Evoe!

[Enter MESSENGER]

MESSENGER
Attend all ye who dwell beside the halls
Of Cadmus and Amphion. No man's life
As of one tenor would I praise or blame,
For Fortune with a constant ebb and rise
Casts down and raises high and low alike,
And none can read a mortal's horoscope.
Take Creon; he, methought, if any man,
Was enviable. He had saved this land
Of Cadmus from our enemies and attained
A monarch's powers and ruled the state supreme,
While a right noble issue crowned his bliss.
Now all is gone and wasted, for a life
Without life's joys I count a living death.
You'll tell me he has ample store of wealth,
The pomp and circumstance of kings; but if
These give no pleasure, all the rest I count
The shadow of a shade, nor would I weigh
His wealth and power 'gainst a dram of joy.

CHORUS
What fresh woes bring'st thou to the royal house?

MESSENGER
Both dead, and they who live deserve to die.

CHORUS
Who is the slayer, who the victim? speak.

MESSENGER
Haemon; his blood shed by no stranger hand.

CHORUS
What mean ye? by his father's or his own?

MESSENGER
His own; in anger for his father's crime.

CHORUS
O prophet, what thou spakest comes to pass.

MESSENGER
So stands the case; now 'tis for you to act.

CHORUS
Lo! from the palace gates I see approaching
Creon's unhappy wife, Eurydice.
Comes she by chance or learning her son's fate?
[Enter EURYDICE]

EURYDICE
Ye men of Thebes, I overheard your talk.
As I passed out to offer up my prayer
To Pallas, and was drawing back the bar
To open wide the door, upon my ears
There broke a wail that told of household woe
Stricken with terror in my handmaids' arms
I fell and fainted. But repeat your tale
To one not unacquaint with misery.

MESSENGER
Dear mistress, I was there and will relate
The perfect truth, omitting not one word.
Why should we gloze and flatter, to be proved
Liars hereafter? Truth is ever best.
Well, in attendance on my liege, your lord,
I crossed the plain to its utmost margin, where
The corse of Polyneices, gnawn and mauled,
Was lying yet. We offered first a prayer
To Pluto and the goddess of cross-ways,
With contrite hearts, to deprecate their ire.
Then laved with lustral waves the mangled corse,

Laid it on fresh-lopped branches, lit a pyre,
And to his memory piled a mighty mound
Of mother earth. Then to the caverned rock,
The bridal chamber of the maid and Death,
We sped, about to enter. But a guard
Heard from that godless shrine a far shrill wail,
And ran back to our lord to tell the news.
But as he nearer drew a hollow sound
Of lamentation to the King was borne.
He groaned and uttered then this bitter plaint:
"Am I a prophet? miserable me!
Is this the saddest path I ever trod?
'Tis my son's voice that calls me. On press on,
My henchmen, haste with double speed to the tomb
Where rocks down-torn have made a gap, look in
And tell me if in truth I recognize
The voice of Haemon or am heaven-deceived."
So at the bidding of our distraught lord
We looked, and in the craven's vaulted gloom
I saw the maiden lying strangled there,
A noose of linen twined about her neck;
And hard beside her, clasping her cold form,
Her lover lay bewailing his dead bride
Death-wedded, and his father's cruelty.
When the King saw him, with a terrible groan
He moved towards him, crying, "O my son
What hast thou done? What ailed thee? What mischance
Has reft thee of thy reason? O come forth,
Come forth, my son; thy father supplicates."
But the son glared at him with tiger eyes,
Spat in his face, and then, without a word,
Drew his two-hilted sword and smote, but missed
His father flying backwards. Then the boy,
Wroth with himself, poor wretch, incontinent
Fell on his sword and drove it through his side
Home, but yet breathing clasped in his lax arms
The maid, her pallid cheek incarnadined
With his expiring gasps. So there they lay
Two corpses, one in death. His marriage rites

Are consummated in the halls of Death:
A witness that of ills whate'er befall
Mortals' unwisdom is the worst of all.
[Exit EURYDICE]

CHORUS
What makest thou of this? The Queen has gone
Without a word importing good or ill.

MESSENGER
I marvel too, but entertain good hope.
'Tis that she shrinks in public to lament
Her son's sad ending, and in privacy
Would with her maidens mourn a private loss.
Trust me, she is discreet and will not err.

CHORUS
I know not, but strained silence, so I deem,
Is no less ominous than excessive grief.

MESSENGER
Well, let us to the house and solve our doubts,
Whether the tumult of her heart conceals
Some fell design. It may be thou art right:
Unnatural silence signifies no good.

CHORUS
Lo! the King himself appears.
Evidence he with him bears
'Gainst himself (ah me! I quake
'Gainst a king such charge to make)
But all must own,
The guilt is his and his alone.

CREON
(Str. 1)
Woe for sin of minds perverse,
Deadly fraught with mortal curse.
Behold us slain and slayers, all akin.
Woe for my counsel dire, conceived in sin.

Alas, my son,
Life scarce begun,
Thou wast undone.
The fault was mine, mine only, O my son!

CHORUS
Too late thou seemest to perceive the truth.

CREON
(Str. 2)
By sorrow schooled. Heavy the hand of God,
Thorny and rough the paths my feet have trod,
Humbled my pride, my pleasure turned to pain;
Poor mortals, how we labor all in vain!
[Enter SECOND MESSENGER]

SECOND MESSENGER
Sorrows are thine, my lord, and more to come,
One lying at thy feet, another yet
More grievous waits thee, when thou comest home.

CREON
What woe is lacking to my tale of woes?

SECOND MESSENGER
Thy wife, the mother of thy dead son here,
Lies stricken by a fresh inflicted blow.

CREON
(Ant. 1)
How bottomless the pit!
Does claim me too, O Death?
What is this word he saith,
This woeful messenger? Say, is it fit
To slay anew a man already slain?
Is Death at work again,
Stroke upon stroke, first son, then mother slain?

CHORUS
Look for thyself. She lies for all to view.

CREON
(Ant. 2)
Alas! another added woe I see.
What more remains to crown my agony?
A minute past I clasped a lifeless son,
And now another victim Death hath won.
Unhappy mother, most unhappy son!

SECOND MESSENGER
Beside the altar on a keen-edged sword
She fell and closed her eyes in night, but erst
She mourned for Megareus who nobly died
Long since, then for her son; with her last breath
She cursed thee, the slayer of her child.

CREON
(Str. 3)
I shudder with affright
O for a two-edged sword to slay outright
A wretch like me,
Made one with misery.

SECOND MESSENGER
'Tis true that thou wert charged by the dead Queen
As author of both deaths, hers and her son's.

CREON
In what wise was her self-destruction wrought?

SECOND MESSENGER
Hearing the loud lament above her son
With her own hand she stabbed herself to the heart.

CREON
(Str. 4)
I am the guilty cause. I did the deed,
Thy murderer. Yea, I guilty plead.
My henchmen, lead me hence, away, away,
A cipher, less than nothing; no delay!

CHORUS

Well said, if in disaster aught is well
His past endure demand the speediest cure.

CREON
(Ant. 3)
Come, Fate, a friend at need,
Come with all speed!
Come, my best friend,
And speed my end!
Away, away!
Let me not look upon another day!

CHORUS
This for the morrow; to us are present needs
That they whom it concerns must take in hand.

CREON
I join your prayer that echoes my desire.

CHORUS
O pray not, prayers are idle; from the doom
Of fate for mortals refuge is there none.

CREON
(Ant. 4)
Away with me, a worthless wretch who slew
Unwitting thee, my son, thy mother too.
Whither to turn I know now; every way
Leads but astray,
And on my head I feel the heavy weight
Of crushing Fate.

CHORUS
Of happiness the chiefest part
Is a wise heart:
And to defraud the gods in aught
With peril's fraught.
Swelling words of high-flown might
Mightily the gods do smite.
Chastisement for errors past

Wisdom brings to age at last.

THE WOMEN OF TRACHIS

Translated by Lewis Campbell

The date of the first performance of *The Women of Trachis* is unknown and scholars have speculated a wide range of dates for its initial performance. Some argue that the play was written relatively early in Sophocles' career, around 450 BC, as the dramatic form is not as well developed as in other extant works. Another piece of evidence is the fact that the plot of the play is similar to a story related by Bacchylides in his poem XVI, but different in significant respects from earlier known versions of this myth.

The tragedy begins with Deianeira, the wife of Heracles, relating the story of her early life and her plight adjusting to married life. She feels distraught over her husband's neglect of her family. Often involved in some adventure, he rarely visits them. She sends their son Hyllus to find him, as she is concerned over prophecies about Heracles and the land he is currently in. After Hyllus sets off, a messenger arrives with word that Heracles, victorious in his recent battle, is making offerings on Cape Cenaeum and coming home soon to Trachis.

Lichas, a herald of Heracles, brings in a procession of captives. He gives Deianeira a false story of why Heracles had laid siege to the city of Oechalia. He claimed Eurytus, the city's king, was responsible for Heracles being enslaved, and therefore Heracles vowed revenge against him and his people. Among the captured girls is Iole, daughter of Eurytus. Deianeira soon learns that in truth Heracles laid siege to the city just to obtain Iole, whom he has taken as a lover.

Unable to cope with the thought of her husband falling for this younger woman, she decides to use a magic potion that will win him back. When she was younger, she had been carried across a river by the centaur, Nessus. Halfway across, he made a savage grab at her, but Heracles came to her rescue and quickly shot him with an arrow. As he died, he had told her his blood, now mixed with the poison of the Lernaean Hydra in which Heracles' arrow had been dipped, would keep Heracles from loving any other woman more than her, if she would follow his instructions. Therefore Deianeira decides to dye a robe with the blood and has Lichas carry it to Heracles with strict instructions that no one else should wear it, and that it should be kept in the dark until he puts it on.

After the gift is sent, she begins experience ominous feelings of regret. She throws some of the left-over material into sunlight and it reacts like boiling acid and she realises that Nessus had lied about the 'love charm'. Hyllus soon arrives

to inform her that Heracles lies dying due to her gift. He was in such pain and fury that he killed Lichas, the deliverer of the gift. Deianeira feels enormous shame for what she has done, amplified by her son's harsh words and so kills herself. Hyllus discovers soon after that it wasn't actually her intention to kill her husband. The dying Heracles is carried to his home in terrible pain and he is furious over what he believes was a murder attempt by his wife. Hyllus explains the truth and the great hero realises that the prophesies about his death have come to pass: he was to be killed by someone who was already dead and it turned out to be Nessus.

In the end, he is in so much pain that he is begging for someone to finish him off. In this weakened state, he says he is like a woman. He makes a final wish, which Hyllus promises to obey under protest, that Hyllus is to marry Iole. The play concludes with Heracles being carried off to be burned alive, as an ending to his suffering.

‘Deianira’ by Evelyn De Morgan

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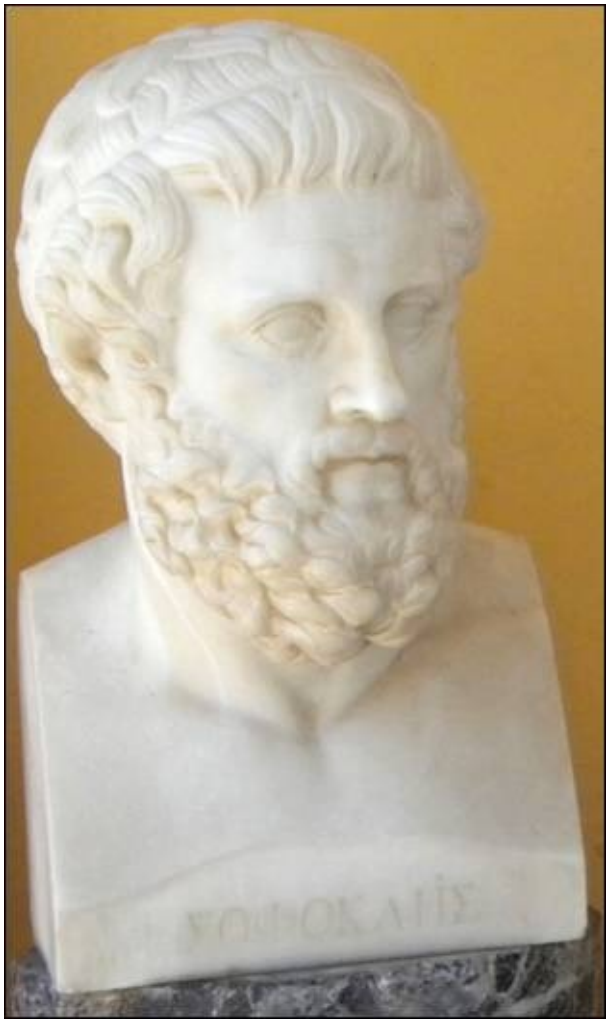

Bust of Sophocles from Corfu

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

DÊANIRA, wife of Heracles.
An Attendant.
HYLLUS, son of Heracles and Dêanira.
CHORUS of Trachinian Maidens.
A Messenger.
LICHAS, the Herald.
A Nurse.
An Old Man.
HERACLES.
IOLE, who does not speak.

SCENE. Before the temporary abode of Heracles in Trachis.

This tragedy is named from the Chorus. From the subject it might have been called ‘Deanira or the Death of Heracles’.

ARGUMENT

The Centaur Nessus, in dying by the arrow of Heracles, which had been dipped in the venom of the Hydra, persuaded the bride Deanira, whose beauty was the cause of his death, to keep some of the blood from the wound as a love-charm for her husband. Many years afterwards, when Heracles was returning from his last exploit of sacking Oechalia, in Euboea, he sent before him, by his herald Lichas, Iole, the king’s daughter, whom he had espoused. Deanira, when she had discovered this, commissioned Lichas when he returned to present his master with a robe, which she had anointed with the charm, — hoping by this means to regain her lord’s affection. But the poison of the Hydra did its work, and Heracles died in agony, Deanira having already killed herself on ascertaining what she had done. The action takes place in Trachis, near the Mahae Gulf, where Heracles and Deanira, by permission of Ceyx, the king of the country, have been living in exile. At the close of the drama, Heracles, while yet alive, is carried towards his pyre on Mount Oeta.

THE WOMEN OF TRACHIS

DÊANIRA. Men say,— ’twas old experience gave the word,
— ‘No lot of mortal, ere he die, can once
Be known for good or evil.’ But I know,
Before I come to the dark dwelling-place,
Mine is a lot, adverse and hard and sore.
Who yet at Pleuron, in my father’s home,
Of all Aetolian women had most cause
To fear my bridal. For a river-god,
Swift Achelôüs, was my suitor there
And sought me from my father in three forms;
Now in his own bull-likeness, now a serpent
Of coiling sheen, and now with manlike build
But bovine front, while from the shadowy beard
Sprang fountain-waters in perpetual spray.
Looking for such a husband, I, poor girl!
Still prayed that Death might find me, ere I knew
That nuptial. — Later, to my glad relief,
Zeus’ and Alcmena’s glorious offspring came,
And closed with him in conflict, and released
My heart from torment. How the fight was won
I could not tell. If any were who saw
Unshaken of dread foreboding, such may speak.
But I sate quailing with an anguished fear,
Lest beauty might procure me nought but pain,
Till He that rules the issue of all strife,
Gave fortunate end — if fortunate! For since,
Assigned by that day’s conquest, I have known
The couch of Heracles, my life is spent
In one continual terror for his fate.
Night brings him, and, ere morning, some fresh toil
Drives him afar. And I have borne him seed;
Which he, like some strange husbandman that farms
A distant field, finds but at sowing time
And once in harvest. Such a weary life
Still tossed him to and fro, — no sooner home

But forth again, serving I know not whom.
And when his glorious head had risen beyond
These labours, came the strongest of my fear.
For since he quelled the might of Iphitus,
We here in Trachis dwell, far from our home,
Dependent on a stranger, but where he
Is gone, none knoweth. Only this I know,
His going pierced my heart with pangs for him,
And now I am all but sure he bears some woe.
These fifteen months he hath sent me not one word.
And I have cause for fear. Ere he set forth
He left a scroll with me, whose dark intent
I oft pray Heaven may bring no sorrow down.

ATTENDANT. Queen Dêanira, many a time ere now
Have I beheld thee with all tearful moan
Bewailing the departure of thy lord.
But, if it be permitted that a slave
Should tender counsel to the free, my voice
May venture this: — Of thy strong band of sons
Why is not one commissioned to explore
For Heracles? and why not Hyllus first,
Whom most it would beseem to show regard
For tidings of his father's happiness?
Ah! here I see him bounding home, with feet
Apt for employment! If you count me wise,
He and my words attend upon your will.

Enter HYLLUS.

DÊ. Dear child, dear boy! even from the lowliest head
Wise counsel may come forth. This woman here,
Though a bond-maiden, hath a freeborn tongue.

HYL. What word is spoken, mother? May I know?

DÊ. That, with thy father lost to us so long,
'Tis shame thou dost not learn his dwelling-place.

HYL. Yea, I have learnt, if one may trust report.

DÊ. Where art thou told his seat is fixed, my son?

HYL. ’Tis said that through the length of this past year
He wrought as bondman to a Lydian girl.

DÊ. Hath he borne that? Then nothing can be strange!

HYL. Well, that is over, I am told. He is free.

DÊ. Where is he rumoured, then, alive or dead?

HYL. In rich Euboea, besieging, as they tell,
The town of Eurytus, or offering siege.

DÊ. Child, hast thou heard what holy oracles
He left with me, touching that very land?

HYL. What were they, mother, for I never knew?

DÊ. That either he must end his being there,
Or, this one feat performed, his following time
Should grace his life with fair prosperity.
Wilt thou not then, my child, when he is held
In such a crisis of uncertain peril,
Run to his aid? — since we must perish with him,
Or owe our lasting safety to his life.

HYL. I will go, mother. Had I heard this voice
Of prophecy, long since I had been there.
Fear is unwonted for our father’s lot.
But now I know, my strength shall all be spent
To learn the course of these affairs in full.

DÊ. Go then, my son. Though late, to learn and do
What wisdom bids, hath certainty of gain.
[Exit HYLLUS. DÊANIRA withdraws

CHORUS (entering and turning towards the East).

Born of the starry night in her undoing,I 1
Lulled in her bosom at thy parting glow,
O Sun! I bid thee show,
What journey is Alcmena’s child pursuing?

What region holds him now,
‘Mong winding channels of the deep,
Or Asian plains, or rugged Western steep?
Declare it, thou
Peerless in vision of thy flashing ray
That lightens on the world with each new day.

Sad Dêanira, bride of battle-wooing,I 2 [104-143]
Ne’er lets her tearful eyelids close in rest,
But in love-longing breast,
Like some lorn bird its desolation rueing,
Of her great husband’s way
Still mindful, worn with harrowing fear
Lest some new danger for him should be near,
By night and day
Pines on her widowed couch of ceaseless thought,
With dread of evil destiny distraught:[Enter DÊANIRA.

For many as are billows of the SouthII 1
Blowing unweariedly, or Northern gale,
One going and another coming on
Incessantly, baffling the gazer’s eye,
Such Cretan ocean of unending toil
Cradles our Cadmus-born, and swells his fame.
But still some power doth his foot recall
From stumbling down to Hades’ darkling hall.

Wherefore, in censure of thy mood, I bringII 2
Glad, though opposing, counsel. Let not hope
Grow weary. Never hath a painless life
Been cast on mortals by the power supreme
Of the All-disposer, Cronos’ son. But joy
And sorrow visit in perpetual round
All mortals, even as circleth still on high
The constellation of the Northern sky.

What lasteth in the world? Not starry night,III
Nor wealth, nor tribulation; but is gone
All suddenly, while to another soul
The joy or the privation passeth on.

These hopes I bid thee also, O my Queen!
Hold fast continually, for who hath seen
Zeus so forgetful of his own?
How can his providence forsake his son?

DÊ. I see you have been told of my distress,
And that hath brought you. But my inward woe,
Be it evermore unknown to you, as now!
[144-179] Such the fair garden of untrammeled ease
Where the young life grows safely. No fierce heat,
No rain, no wind disturbs it, but unharmed
It rises amid airs of peace and joy,
Till maiden turn to matron, and the night
Inherit her dark share of anxious thought,
Haunted with fears for husband or for child.
Then, imaged through her own calamity,
Some one may guess the burden of my life.
Full many have been the sorrows I have wept,
But one above the rest I tell to-day.
When my great husband parted last from home,
He left within the house an ancient scroll
Inscribed with characters of mystic note,
Which Heracles had never heretofore,
In former labours, cared to let me see, —
As bound for bright achievement, not for death.
But now, as though his life had end, he told
What marriage-portion I must keep, what shares
He left his sons out of their father’s ground:
And set a time, when fifteen moons were spent,
Counted from his departure, that even then
Or he must die, or if that date were out
And he had run beyond it, he should live
Thenceforth a painless and untroubled life.
Such by Heaven’s fiat was the promised end
Of Heracles’ long labours, as he said;
So once the ancient oak-tree had proclaimed
In high Dodona through the sacred Doves.
Of which prediction on this present hour
In destined order of accomplishment

The veritable issue doth depend.
And I, dear friends, while taking rest, will oft
Start from sweet slumbers with a sudden fear,
Scared by the thought, my life may be bereft
Of the best husband in the world of men.

CH. Hush! For I see approaching one in haste,
Garlanded, as if laden with good news.

[180-212]

Enter Messenger.

MESSENGER. Queen Dêanira, mine shall be the tongue
To free thee first from fear. Alcmena's child
Is living, be assured, and triumphing,
And bringing to our Gods the fruits of war.

DÊ. What mean'st thou, aged sir, by what thou sayest?

MESS. That soon thy husband, envied all around,
Will come, distinguished with victorious might.

DÊ. What citizen or stranger told thee this?

MESS. Your herald Lichas, where the oxen graze
The summer meadow, cries this to a crowd.
I, hearing, flew off hither, that being first
To bring thee word thereof, I might be sure
To win reward and gratitude from thee.

DÊ. And how is he not here, if all be well?

MESS. Crossed by no light impediment, my Queen.
For all the Maliac people, gathering round,
Throng him with question, that he cannot move.
But he must still the travail of each soul,
And none will be dismissed unsatisfied.
Such willing audience he unwillingly
Harangues, but soon himself will come in sight.

DÊ. O Zeus! who rulest Oeta's virgin wold,
At last, though late, thou hast vouchsafed us joy

At last, though late, thou hast vouchsafed us joy.
Lift up your voices, O my women! ye
Within the halls, and ye beyond the gate!
For now we reap the gladness of a ray,
That dawns unhoped for in this rumour's sound.

CHORUS

With a shout by the hearth let the palace roof ring
From those that are dreaming of bridal, and ye,
Young men, let your voices in harmony sing
To the God of the quiver, the Lord of the free!
And the Paean withal from the maiden band
To Artemis, huntress of many a land,
Let it rise o'er the glad roof tree,
[213-243] To Phoebus' own sister, with fire in each hand,
And the Nymphs that her co-mates be!
My spirit soars. O sovereign of my soul!
I will accept the thrilling flute's control.[They dance
The ivy-crownèd thyrsus, see!
With Bacchic fire is kindling me,
And turns my emulous tread
Where'er the mazy dance may lead.
Euoî! Euoî!
O Paean! send us joy.
See, dearest Queen, behold!
Before thy gaze the event will now unfold.

DÊ. Think not mine eye hath kept such careless guard,
Dear maids, that I could miss this moving train.
Herald, I bid thee hail, although so late
Appearing, if thou bringest health with thee!

Enter LICHAS, with Captive Women.

LICHAS. A happy welcome on a happy way,
As prosperous our achievement. Meet it is
Good words should greet bright actions, mistress mine!

DÊ. Kind friend, first tell me what I first would know —
Shall I receive my Heracles alive?

LICH. I left him certainly alive and strong:
Blooming in health, not with disease oppressed.

DÊ. In Greece, or in some barbarous country? Tell!

LICH. Euboea’s island hath a promontory,
Where to Cenaean Zeus he consecrates
Rich altars and the tribute of the ground.

DÊ. Moved by an oracle, or from some vow?

LICH. So vowed he when he conquered with the spear
The country of these women whom you see.

DÊ. And who, by Heaven, are they? Who was their sire?
Their case is piteous, or eludes my thought.

[244-280] LICH. He took them for the service of the Gods
And his own house, when high Oechalia fell.

DÊ. Was’t then before that city he was kept
Those endless ages of uncounted time?

LICH. Not so. The greater while he was detained
Among the Lydians, sold, as he declares,
To bondage. Nor be jealous of the word,
Since Heaven, my Queen, was author of the deed.
Enthrallèd so to Asian Omphalè,
He, as himself avers, fulfilled his year.
The felt reproach whereof so chafed his soul,
He bound fierce curses on himself and sware
That, — children, wife and all, — he yet would bring
In captive chains the mover of this harm.
Nor did this perish like an idle word,
But, when the stain was off him, straight he drew
Allied battalions to assault the town
Of Eurytus, whom, sole of earthly powers,
He had noted as the source of his annoy,
Because, having received him in his hall
A guest of ancient days, he burst on him
With outrage of loud voice and villanous mind,

Saying, ‘with his hand upon the unerring bow,
Oechalia’s princes could o’ershoot his skill;
And born to bondage, he must quail beneath
His overlord’; lastly, to crown this cry,
When at a banquet he was filled with wine,
He flung him out of door. Whereat being wroth,
When Iphitus to the Tirynthian height
Followed the track where his brood-mares had strayed,
He, while the thought and eye of the man by chance
Were sundered, threw him from the tower-crowned cliff.
In anger for which deed the Olympian King,
Father of Gods and men, delivered him
To be a bond-slave, nor could brook the offence,
That of all lives he vanquished, this alone
Should have been ta’en by guile. For had he wrought
In open quittance of outrageous wrong,
Even Zeus had granted that his cause was just.
The braggart hath no favour even in Heaven.
[281-316] Whence they, o’erweening with their evil tongue,
Are now all dwellers in the house of death,
Their ancient city a captive; — but these women
Whom thou beholdest, from their blest estate
Brought suddenly to taste of piteous woe,
Come to thy care. This task thy wedded lord
Ordained, and I, his faithful minister,
Seek to perform. But, for his noble self,
When with pure hands he hath done sacrifice
To his Great Father for the victory given,
Look for his coming, lady. This last word
Of all my happy speech is far most sweet.

CH. Now surety of delight is thine, my Queen,
Part by report and part before thine eye.

DÊ. Yea, now I learn this triumph of my lord,
Joy reigns without a rival in my breast.
This needs must run with that in fellowship.
Yet wise consideration even of good
Is flecked with fear of what reverse may come.

And I, dear friends, when I behold these maids,
Am visited with sadness deep and strange.
Poor friendless beings, in a foreign land
Wandering forlorn in homeless orphanhood!
Erewhile, free daughters of a freeborn race,
Now, snared in strong captivity for life.
O Zeus of battles, breaker of the war,
Ne'er may I see thee turn against my seed
So cruelly; or, if thou meanest so,
Let me be spared that sorrow by my death!
Such fear in me the sight of these hath wrought.
Who art thou, of all damsels most distressed?
Single or child-bearing? Thy looks would say,
A maid, of no mean lineage. Lichas, tell,
Who is the stranger-nymph? Who gave her birth?
Who was her sire? Mine eye hath pitied her
O'er all, as she o'er all hath sense of woe.

LICH. What know I? Why should'st thou demand? Perchance
Not lowest in the list of souls there born.

DÊ. How if a princess, offspring of their King?

[317-348] LICH. I cannot tell. I did not question far.

DÊ. Have none of her companions breathed her name?

LICH. I brought them silently. I did not hear.

DÊ. Yet speak it to us of thyself, poor maid!
'Tis sorrow not to know thee who thou art.

LICH. She'll ne'er untie her tongue, if she maintain
An even tenor, since nor more nor less
Would she disclose; but, poor unfortunate!
With agonizing sobs and tears she mourns
This crushing sorrow, from the day she left
Her wind-swept home. Her case is cruel, sure, —
And claims a privilege from all who feel.

DÊ. Well, let her go, and pass beneath the roof
In peace, as she desires; nor let fresh pain

in peace, as she desires, nor let fresh pain
From me be added to her previous woe.
She hath enough already. Come, away!
Let's all within at once, that thou mayest speed
Thy journey, and I may order all things here.
[Exit LICHAS, with Captives, into the house. DÊANIRA is about to follow them

Re-enter Messenger.

MESS. Pause first there on the threshold, till you learn
(Apart from those) who 'tis you take within,
And more besides that you yet know not of,
Which deeply imports your knowing. Of all this
I throughly am informed.

DÊ. What cause hast thou
Thus to arrest my going?

MESS. Stand, and hear.
Not idle was my former speech, nor this.

DÊ. Say, must we call them back in presence here,
Or would'st thou tell thy news to these and me?

MESS. To thee and these I may, but let those be.

DÊ. Well, they are gone. Let words declare thy drift.

MESS. That man, in all that he hath lately said,
Hath sinned against the truth: or now he's false,
Or else unfaithful in his first report.

[349-384] DÊ. What? Tell me thy full meaning clearly forth.
That thou hast uttered is all mystery.

MESS. I heard this herald say, while many thronged
To hearken, that this maiden was the cause,
Why lofty-towered Oechalia and her lord
Fell before Heracles, whom Love alone
Of heavenly powers had warmed to this emprise,
And not the Lydian thraldom or the tasks
Of rigorous Omphalè, nor that wild fate

Of rock-thrown Iphitus. Now he thrusts aside
The Love-god, contradicting his first tale.
When he that was her sire could not be brought
To yield the maid for Heracles to hold
In love unrecognized, he framed erelong
A feud about some trifle, and set forth
In arms against this damsel's fatherland
(Where Eurytus, the herald said, was king)
And slew the chief her father; yea, and sacked
Their city. Now returning, as you see,
He sends her hither to his halls, no slave,
Nor unregarded, lady, — dream not so!
Since all his heart is kindled with desire.
I, O my Queen! thought meet to show thee all
The tale I chanced to gather from his mouth,
Which many heard as well as I, i' the midst
Of Trachis' market-place, and can confirm
My witness. I am pained if my plain speech
Sound harshly, but the honest truth I tell.

DÊ. Ah me! Where am I? Whither am I fallen?
What hidden woe have I unwarily
Taken beneath my roof? O misery!
Was she unknown, as he that brought her sware?

MESS. Nay, most distinguished both in birth and mien;
Called in her day of freedom Iolè,
Eurytus' daughter, — of whose parentage,
Forsooth as ignorant, he ne'er would speak.

CH. I curse not all the wicked, but the man
Whose secret practices deform his life.

[385-413] DÊ. Say, maidens, how must I proceed? The words
Now spoken have bewildered all my mind.

CH. Go in and question Lichas, who perchance
Will tell the truth if you but tax him home.

DÊ. I will; you counsel reasonably.

MESS. And I,
Shall I bide here till thou com’st forth? Or how?

DÊ. Remain. For see, without my sending for him,
He issueth from the palace of himself.

Enter LICHAS.

LICH. What message must I carry to my lord?
Tell me, my Queen. I am going, as thou seest.

DÊ. So slow in coming, and so quickly flown,
Ere one have time to talk with thee anew!

LICH. What wouldst thou ask me? I am bent to hear.

DÊ. And art thou bent on truth in the reply?

LICH. By Heaven! in all that I have knowledge of.

DÊ. Then tell me, who is she thou brought’st with thee?

LICH. An islander. I cannot trace her stock.

MESS. Look hither, man. Who is’t to whom thou speakest?

LICH. Why such a question? What is thine intent?

MESS. Nay, start not, but make answer if thou knowest.

LICH. To Dêanira, Oeneus’ queenly child,
Heracles’ wife, — if these mine eyes be true, —
My mistress.

MESS. Ay, that is the very word
I longed to hear thee speak. Thy mistress, sayest?

LICH. To whom I am bound.

MESS. Hold there! What punishment
Wilt thou accept, if thou art found to be
Faithless to her?

LICH. I faithless! What dark speech

Hast thou contrived?

MESS. Not I at all. 'Tis thou
Dost wrap thy thoughts i' the dark.

[414-448] LICH. Well, I will go.
'Tis folly to have heard thee for so long.

MESS. You go not till you answer one word more.

LICH. One, or a thousand! You'll not stint, I see.

MESS. Thou knowest the captive maid thou leddest home?

LICH. I do. But wherefore ask?

MESS. Did you not say
That she, on whom you look with ignorant eye,
Was Iolè, the daughter of the King,
Committed to your charge?

LICH. Where? Among whom?
What witness of such words will bear thee out?

MESS. Many and sound. A goodly company
In Trachis' market-place heard thee speak this.

LICH. Ay.
I said 'twas rumoured. But I could not give
My vague impression for advised report.

MESS. Impression, quotha! Did you not on oath
Proclaim your captive for your master's bride?

LICH. My master's bride! Dear lady, by the Gods,
Who is the stranger? for I know him not.

MESS. One who was present where he heard thee tell,
How that whole city was subdued and taken,
Not for the bondage to the Lydian girl,
But through the longing passion for this maid.

LICH. Dear lady, let the fellow be removed.
To prate with madmen is mere foolishness

To prate with madmen is mere foolishness.

DÊ. Nay, I entreat thee by His name, whose fire
Lightens down Oeta's topmost glen, be not
A niggard of the truth. Thou tell'st thy tale
To no weak woman, but to one who knows
Mankind are never constant to one joy.
Whoso would buffet Love, aspires in vain.
For Love leads even Immortals at his will,
And me. Then how not others, like to me?
'Twere madness, sure, in me to blame my lord
When this hath caught him, or the woman there,
His innocent accomplice in a thing,
No shame to either, and no harm to me.
[449-490] It is not so. But if from him thou learnest
The lore of falsehood, it were best unlearnt;
Or if the instruction comes of thine own thought,
Such would-be kindness doth not prove thee kind.
Then tell me all the truth. To one freeborn
The name of liar is a hateful lot.
And thou canst not be hid. Thy news was heard
By many, who will tell me. If thou fearest,
Thou hast no cause — for doubtfulness is pain,
But to know all, what harm? His loves ere now
Were they not manifold? And none hath borne
Reproach or evil word from me. She shall not,
Though his new passion were as strong as death;
Since most mine eye hath pitied her, because
Her beauty was the ruin of her life,
And all unweeting, she her own bright land,
Poor hapless one! hath ravaged and enslaved. —
Let that be as it must. But for thy part,
Though false to others, be still true to me.

CH. 'Tis fairly said. Comply. Thou ne'er wilt blame
Her faithfulness, and thou wilt earn our loves.

LICH. Yea, dear my Queen, now I have seen thee hold
Thy mortal wishes within mortal bound
So meekly, I will freely tell thee all.
It is as he avers. This maiden's love,

It is as he dwells. This maiden's love,
Piercing through Heracles, was the sole cause,
Why her Oechalia, land of plenteous woe,
Was made the conquest of his spear. And he —
For I dare so far clear him — never bade
Concealment or denial. But myself,
Fearing the word might wound thy queenly heart,
Sinned, if thou count such tenderness a sin.
But now that all is known, for both your sakes,
His, and thine own no less, look favouringly
Upon the woman, and confirm the word
Thou here hast spoken in regard to her: —
For he, whose might is in all else supreme,
Is wholly overmastered by her love.

DÊ. Yea, so my mind is bent. I will do so.
[491-519] I will not, in a bootless strife ‘gainst Heaven,
Augment my misery with self-sought ill.
Come, go we in, that thou may’st bear from me
Such message as is meet, and also carry
Gifts, such as are befitting to return
For gifts new-given. Thou ought’st not to depart
Unladen, having brought so much with thee.[Exeunt

CHORUS.

Victorious in her might,I 1
The Queen of soft delight
Still ranges onward with triumphant sway.
What she from Kronos’ son
And strong Poseidon won,
And Pluto, King of Night, I durst not say.
But who, to earn this bride,
Came forth in sinewy pride
To strive, or e’er the nuptial might be known
With fearless heart I tell
What heroes wrestled well,
With showering blows, and dust in clouds upthrown.

One was a river bold,I 2
Horn-crowned, with tramp fourfold,

Bull Achelôüs, Acarnania’s Fear;
And one from Bacchus’ town,
Own son of Zeus, came down,
With brandished mace, bent bow, and barbèd spear.
Who then in battle brunt,
Together, front to front,
Hurled, eager both to win the beauteous prize;
And Cypris ‘mid the fray
Alone, that dreadful day,
Sate umpire, holding promise in her eyes.

Then clashed the fist, then clanged the bow;II
Then horns gave crashing blow for blow,
Whilst, as they clung,
[520-555] The twining hip throw both essay
And hurtling foreheads’ fearful play,
And groans from each were wrung.

But the tender fair one far away
Sate watching with an eye of piteous cheer
(A mother’s heart will heed the thing I say,)
Till won by him who freed her from her fear.
Sudden she leaves her mother’s gentle side,
Borne through the waste, our hero’s tender bride.

Enter DÊANIRA.

DÊ. Dear friends, while yonder herald in the house
Holds converse with the captives ere he go,
I have stol’n forth to you, partly to tell
The craft my hand hath compassed, and in part,
To crave your pity for my wretchedness.
For I have taken to my hearth a maid, —
And yet, methinks, no maiden any more,
Like some fond shipmaster, taking on board
A cargo fraught with treason to my heart.
And now we two are closed in one embrace
Beneath one coverlet. Such generous meed
For faith in guarding home this dreary while
Hath the kind Heracles our trusty spouse,

Sent in return! Yet, oft as he hath caught
This same distemperature, I know not how
To harbour indignation against him.
But who that is a woman could endure
To dwell with her, both married to one man?
One bloom is still advancing, one doth fade.
The budding flower is cropped, the full-blown head
Is left to wither, while love passeth by
Unheeding. Wherefore I am sore afraid
He will be called my husband, but her mate,
For she is younger. Yet no prudent wife
Would take this angerly, as I have said.
But, dear ones, I will tell you of a way,
Whereof I have bethought me, to prevent
This heart-break. I had hidden of long time
[555-591] In a bronze urn the ancient Centaur's gift,
Which I, when a mere girl, culled from the wound
Of hairy-breasted Nessus in his death.
He o'er Evenus' rolling depths, for hire,
Ferried wayfarers on his arm, not plying
Or rowing-boat, or canvas-wingèd bark.
Who, when with Heracles, a new-made bride,
I followed by my father's sending forth,
Shouldering me too, in the mid-stream, annoyed
With wanton touch. And I cried out; and he,
Zeus' son, turned suddenly, and from his bow
Sent a wing'd shaft, that whizzed into his chest
To the lungs. Then the weird Thing, with dying voice
Spake to me:— 'Child of aged Oeneüs,
Since thou wert my last burden, thou shalt win
Some profit from mine act, if thou wilt do
What now I bid thee. With a careful hand
Collect and bear away the clotted gore
That clogs my wound, e'en where the monster snake
Had dyed the arrow with dark tinct of gall;
And thou shalt have this as a charm of soul
For Heracles, that never through the eye
Shall he receive another love than thine.'
Whereof bethinking me, for since his death

I kept it in a closet locked with care,
I have applied it to this robe, with such
Addition as his living voice ordained. —
The thing is done. No criminal attempts
Could e'er be mine. Far be they from my thought,
As I abhor the woman who conceives them!
But if by any means through gentle spells
And bonds on Heracles' affection, we
May triumph o'er this maiden in his heart,
My scheme is perfected. Unless you deem
Mine action wild. If so, I will desist.

CH. If any ground of confidence approve
Thine act, we cannot check thy counsel here.

DÊ. My confidence is grounded on belief,
Though unconfirmed as yet by actual proof.

[592-627] CH. Well, do it and try. Assurance cannot come
Till action bring experience after it.

DÊ. The truth will soon be known. The man e'en now
Is coming forth, and quickly will be there.
Screen ye but well my counsel. Doubtful deeds,
Wrapt close, will not deliver us to shame.

Enter LICHAS.

LICH. Daughter of Oeneus, tell me thy commands.
Already time rebukes our tardiness.

DÊ. Even that hath been my care, Lichas, while thou
Wert talking to the stranger-maids within,
That thou shouldst take for me this finewoven web,
A present from these fingers to my lord.
And when thou giv'st it, say that none of men
Must wear it on his shoulders before him;
And neither light of sun may look upon it,
Nor holy temple-court, nor household flame,
Till he in open station 'fore the Gods
Display it on a day when bulls are slaughtered.

So once I vowed, that should I ever see
Or hear his safe return, I would enfold
His glorious person in this robe, and show
To all the Gods in doing sacrifice
Him a fresh worshipper in fresh array. —
The truth hereof he will with ease descry
Betokened on this treasure-guarding seal. —
Now go, and be advised, of this in chief,
To act within thine office; then of this,
To bear thee so, that from his thanks and mine
Meeting in one, a twofold grace may spring.

LICH. If this my Hermes-craft be firm and sure,
Then never will I fail thee, O my Queen!
But I will show the casket as it is
To whom I bear it, and in faithfulness
Add all the words thou sendest in fit place.

DÊ. Go, then, at once. Thou hast full cognizance
How things within the palace are preserved?

LICH. I know, and will declare. There is no flaw.

[628-662] DÊ. Methinks thou knowest too, for thou hast seen,
My kind reception of the stranger-maid?

LICH. I saw, and was amazed with heart-struck joy.

DÊ. What more is there to tell? — Too rash, I fear,
Were thy report of longing on my part,
Till we can learn if we be longed for there.[Exeunt severally

CHORUS.

O ye that haunt the strandI 1
Where ships in quiet land
Near Oeta’s height and the warm rock-drawn well,
And ye round Melis’ inland gulf who dwell,
Worshipping her who wields the golden wand, —
(There Hellas’ wisest meet in council strong):
Soon shall the flute arise
With sound of glad surprise,

Thrilling your sense with no unwelcome song,
But tones that to the harp of Heavenly Muse belong.

Zeus' and Alcmena's son, — I 2
All deeds of glory done, —
Speeds now triumphant to his home, whom we
Twelve weary months of blind expectancy
Lost in vast distance, from our country gone.
While, sadly languishing, his loving wife,
Still flowing down with tears,
Pined with unnumbered fears.
But Ares, lately stung to furious strife,
Frees him for ever from the toilsome life.

O let him come to-day!II
Ne'er may his vessel stay,
But glide with feathery sweep of many an oar,
Till from his altar by yon island shore
Even to our town he wind his prosperous way,
In mien returning mild,
And inly reconciled,
With that anointing in his heart ingrained,
Which the dark Centaur's wizard lips ordained.

[663-695]

Enter DÊANIRA.

DÊ. O how I fear, my friends, lest all too far
I have ventured in my action of to-day!

CH. What ails thee, Dêanira, Oeneus' child?

DÊ. I know not, but am haunted by a dread,
Lest quickly I be found to have performed
A mighty mischief, through bright hopes betrayed.

CH. Thou dost not mean thy gift to Heracles?

DÊ. Indeed I do. Now I perceive how fond
Is eagerness, where actions are obscure.

CH. Tell, if it may be told, thy cause of fear.

DÊ. A thing is come to pass, which should I tell,
Will strike you with strange wonder when you learn.
For, O my friends, the stuff wherewith I dressed
That robe, a flock of soft and milkwhite wool,
Is shrivelled out of sight, not gnawn by tooth
Of any creature here, but, self-consumed,
Frittered and wasting on the courtyard-stones.
To let you know the circumstance at full,
I will speak on. Of all the Centaur-Thing,
When labouring in his side with the fell point
O' the shaft, enjoined me, I had nothing lost,
But his vaticination in my heart
Remained indelible, as though engraved
With pen of iron upon brass. 'Twas thus: —
I was to keep this unguent closely hid
In dark recesses, where no heat of fire
Or warming ray might reach it, till with fresh
Anointing I addressed it to an end.
So I had done. And now this was to do,
Within my chamber covertly I spread
The ointment with piece of wool, a tuft
Pulled from a home-bred sheep; and, as ye saw,
I folded up my gift and packed it close
In hollow casket from the glaring sun.
But, entering in, a fact encounters me
Past human wit to fathom with surmise.
For, as it happened, I had tossed aside
The bit of wool I worked with, carelessly,
[696-733] Into the open daylight, 'mid the blaze
Of Helios' beam. And, as it kindled warm,
It fell away to nothing, crumbled small,
Like dust in severing wood by sawyers strewn.
So, on the point of vanishing, it lay.
But, from the place where it had lain, brake forth
A frothy scum in clots of seething foam,
Like the rich draught in purple vintage poured
From Bacchus' vine upon the thirsty ground.

And I, unhappy, know not toward what thought
To turn me, but I see mine act is dire.
For wherefore should the Centaur, for what end,
Show kindness to the cause for whom he died?
That cannot be. But seeking to destroy
His slayer, he cajoled me. This I learn
Too late, by sad experience, for no good.
And, if I err not now, my hapless fate
Is all alone to be his murderess.
For, well I know, the shaft that made the wound
Gave pain to Cheiron, who was more than man;
And wheresoe'er it falls, it ravageth
All the wild creatures of the world. And now
This gory venom blackly spreading bane
From Nessus' angry wound, must it not cause
The death of Heracles? I think it must.
Yet my resolve is firm, if aught harm him,
My death shall follow in the self-same hour.
She cannot bear to live in evil fame,
Who cares to have a nature pure from ill.

CH. Horrid mischance must needs occasion fear.
But Hope is not condemned before the event.

DÊ. In ill-advised proceeding not even Hope
Remains to minister a cheerful mind.

CH. Yet to have erred unwittingly abates
The fire of wrath; and thou art in this case.

DÊ. So speaks not he who hath a share of sin,
But who is clear of all offence at home.

CH. 'Twere well to say no more, unless thou hast aught
To impart to thine own son: for he is here,
Who went erewhile to find his father forth.

[734-766]

HYLLUS (re-entering).

O mother, mother! I would to heaven one of three things were true:

O mother, mother! I would to heaven one of three things were true.
Either that thou wert dead, or, living, wert
No mother to me, or hadst gained a mind
Furnished with better thoughts than thou hast now!

DÊ. My son! what canst thou so mislike in me?

HYL. I tell thee thou this day hast been the death
Of him that was thy husband and my sire.

DÊ. What word hath passed thy lips? my child, my child!

HYL. A word that must be verified. For who
Can make the accomplished fact as things undone?

DÊ. Alas, my son! what saidst thou? Who hath told
That I have wrought a deed so full of woe?

HYL. ’Twas I myself that saw with these mine eyes
My father’s heavy state: — no hearsay word.

DÊ. And where didst thou come near him and stand by?

HYL. Art thou to hear it? On, then, with my tale!
When after sacking Eurytus’ great city
He marched in triumph with first-fruits of war, —
There is a headland, last of long Euboea,
Surf-beat Cenaeum, — where to his father Zeus
He dedicates high altars and a grove.
There first I saw him, gladdened from desire.
And when he now addressed him to the work
Of various sacrifice, the herald Lichas
Arrived from home, bearing thy fatal gift,
The deadly robe: wherewith invested straight,
As thou hadst given charge, he sacrificed
The firstlings of the spoil, twelve bulls entire,
Each after each. But the full count he brought
Was a clear hundred of all kinds of head.
Then the all-hapless one commenced his prayer
In solemn gladness for the bright array.
But presently, when from the holy things,
And from the richness of the oak-tree core,

[766-802] There issued flame mingled with blood, a sweat
Rose on his flesh, and close to every limb
Clung, like stone-drapery from the craftsman's hand,
The garment, glued unto his side. Then came
The tearing pangs within his bones, and then
The poison feasted like the venomed tooth
Of murderous basilisk. — When this began,
He shouted on poor Lichas, none to blame
For thy sole crime, 'What guile is here, thou knave?
What was thy fraud in fetching me this robe?'
He, all-unknowing, in an evil hour
Declared his message, that the gift was thine.
Whereat the hero, while the shooting spasm
Had fastened on the lungs, seized him by the foot
Where the ankle turns i' the socket, and, with a thought,
Hurl'd on a surf-vex'd reef that showed i' the sea:
And rained the grey pulp from the hair, the brain
Being scattered with the blood. Then the great throng
Saddened their festival with piteous wail
For one in death and one in agony.
And none had courage to approach my sire, —
Convulsed upon the ground, then tossed i' the air
With horrid yells and crying, till the cliffs
Echoed round, the mountain-promontories
Of Locris, and Euboea's rugged shore.
Wearied at length with flinging on the earth,
And shrieking oft with lamentable cry,
Cursing the fatal marriage with thyself
The all-wretched, and the bond to Oeneus' house,
That prize that was the poisoner of his peace,
He lifted a wild glance above the smoke
That hung around, and 'midst the crowd of men
Saw me in tears, and looked on me and said,
'O son, come near; fly not from my distress,
Though thou shouldst be consumèd in my death,
But lift and bear me forth; and, if thou mayest,
Set me where no one of mankind shall see me.
But if thy heart withhold thee, yet convey me
Out of this land as quickly as ye may.

Let me not die where I am now.’ We then,
[803-833] Thus urgently commanded, laid him down
Within our bark, and hardly to this shore
Rowed him convulsed and roaring. — Presently,
He will appear, alive or lately dead.
Such, mother, is the crime thou hast devised
And done against our sire, wherefore let Right
And Vengeance punish thee! — May I pray so?
I may: for thou absolv’st me by thy deed,
Thou that hast slain the noblest of the Earth,
Thy spouse, whose like thou ne’er wilt see again. [Exit DÊANIRA.

CH. Why steal’st thou forth in silence? Know’st thou not
Thy silence argues thine accuser’s plea?

HYL. Let her go off. Would that a sudden flood
Might sweep her far and swiftly from mine eye!
Why fondle vainly the fair-sounding name
Of mother, when her acts are all unmotherly?
Let her begone for me: and may she find
Such joy as she hath rendered to my sire![Exit HYLLUS

CHORUS.

See where falls the doom, of oldI 1
By the unerring Voice foretold, —
‘When twelve troublous years have rolled,
Then shall end your long desire:
Toil on toil no more shall tire
The offspring of the Eternal Sire.’
Lo! the destined Hour is come!
Lo! it hath brought its burden home.
For when the eyes have looked their last
How should sore labour vex again?
How, when the powers of will and thought are past,
Should life be any more enthralled to pain?

And if Nessus’ withering shroud,I 2
Wrought by destiny and craft,
Steep him in a poisonous cloud.

Steaming from the venomed shaft,
[834-870]
Which to Death in hideous lair
The many-wreathed Hydra bare,
How shall he another day
Feel the glad warmth of Helios' ray? —
Enfolded by the Monster-Thing
Of Lerna, while the cruel sting
Of the shagg'd Centaur's murderous-guileful tongue
Breaks forth withal to do him painful wrong.

And she, poor innocent, who sawII 1
Checkless advancing to the gate
A mighty harm unto her state, —
This rash young bridal without fear of law, —
Gave not her will to aught that caused this woe,
But since it came through that strange mind's conceiving, —
That ruined her in meeting, — deeply grieving,
She mourns with dewy tears in tenderest flow.
The approaching hour appeareth great with woe:
Some guile-born misery doth Fate foreshow.

The springs of sorrow are unbound,II 2
And such an agony disclose,
As never from the hands of foes
To afflict the life of Heracles was found.
O dark with battle-stains, world-champion spear,
That from Oechalia's highland leddest then
This bride that followed swiftly in thy train,
How fatally overshadowing was thy fear!
But these wild sorrows all too clearly come
From Love's dread minister, disguised and dumb.

CH. 1. Am I a fool, or do I truly hear
Lament new-rising from our master's home?
Tell!

CH. 2. Clearly from within a wailing voice
Peals piteously. The house hath some fresh woe.

CH. 3. Mark!

CH. 3. Mark.
How strangely, with what cloud upon her brow,
Yon aged matron with her tidings moves!

[871-902]

Enter Nurse.

NURSE. Ah! mighty, O my daughters! was the grief
Sprung from the gift to Heracles conveyed!

LEADER OF CH. What new thing is befallen? Why speak’st thou so?

NUR. Our Queen hath found her latest journey’s end.
Even now she is gone, without the help of feet.

CH. Not dead?

NUR. You know the whole.

CH. Dead! hapless Queen!

NUR. The truth hath twice been told.

CH. O tell us how!
What was her death, poor victim of dire woe?

NUR. Most ruthless was the deed.

CH. Say, woman, say!
What was the sudden end?

NUR. Herself she slew.

CH. What rage, what madness, clutched
The mischief-working brand?
How could her single thought
Contrive the accomplishment of death on death?

NUR. Chill iron stopped the sources of her breath.

CH. And thou, poor helpless crone, didst see this done?

NUR. Yea, I stood near and saw.

CH. How was it? Tell!

NUR. With her own hand this violence was given.

CH. What do I hear?

NUR. The certainty of truth.

CH. A child is come,
From this new bridal that hath rushed within,
A fresh-born Fury of woe!

NUR. Too true. But hadst thou been at hand to see
Her action, pity would have wrung thy soul.

CH. Could this be ventured by a woman’s hand?

NUR. Ay, and in dreadful wise, as thou shalt hear.
When all alone she had gone within the gate,
And passing through the court beheld her boy
Spreading the couch that should receive his sire,
[902-946] Ere he returned to meet him, — out of sight
She hid herself, and fell at the altar’s foot,
And loudly cried that she was left forlorn;
And, taking in her touch each household thing
That formerly she used, poor lady, wept
O’er all; and then went ranging through the rooms,
Where, if there caught her eye the well-loved form
Of any of her household, she would gaze
And weep aloud, accusing her own fate
And her abandoned lot, childless henceforth!
When this was ended, suddenly I see her
Fly to the hero’s room of genial rest.
With unsuspected gaze o’ershadowed near,
I watched, and saw her casting on the bed
The finest sheets of all. When that was done,
She leapt upon the couch where they had lain
And sat there in the midst. And the hot flood
Burst from her eyes before she spake:— ‘Farewell,
My bridal bed, for never more shalt thou
Give me the comfort I have known thee give.’

Then with tight fingers she undid her robe,
Where the brooch lay before the breast, and bared
All her left arm and side. I, with what speed
Strength ministered, ran forth to tell her son
The act she was preparing. But meanwhile,
Ere we could come again, the fatal blow
Fell, and we saw the wound. And he, her boy,
Seeing, wept aloud. For now the hapless youth
Knew that himself had done this in his wrath,
Told all too late i' the house, how she had wrought
Most innocently, from the Centaur's wit.
So now the unhappy one, with passionate words
And cries and wild embracings of the dead,
Groaned forth that he had slain her with false breath
Of evil accusation, and was left
Orphaned of both, his mother and his sire.
Such is the state within. What fool is he
That counts one day, or two, or more to come?
To-morrow is not, till the present day
In fair prosperity have passed away.[Exit

[947-975]

CHORUS.

Which shall come first in my wail,I 1
Which shall be last to prevail,
Is a doubt that will never be done.

Trouble at home may be seen,I 2
Trouble is looked for with teen;
And to have and to look for are one.

Would some fair windII 1
But waft me forth to roam
Far from the native region of my home,
Ere death me find, oppressed with wild affright
Even at the sudden sight
Of him, the valiant son of Zeus most High!
Before the house, they tell, he fareth nigh,
A wonder beyond thought

A wonder beyond thought,
With torment unapproachable distraught.

Hark! ...II 2
The cause then of my cry
Was coming all too nigh:
(Doth the clear nightingale lament for nought?)
Some step of stranger folk is this way brought.
As for a friend they love
Heavy and slow with noiseless feet they move.
Which way? which way? Ah me! behold him come.
His pallid lips are dumb.
Dead, or at rest in sleep? What shall I say?
[HERACLES is brought in on a litter, accompanied by HYLLUS and an Old Man

HYL. Oh, woe is me!
My father, piteous woe for thee!
Oh, whither shall I turn my thought! Ah me!

OLD M. Hush! speak not, O my child,
Lest torment fierce and wild
Rekindle in thy father's rugged breast,
And break this rest
[976-1003] Where now his life is held at point to fall.
With firm lips clenched refrain thy voice through all.

HYL. Yet tell me, doth he live,
Old sir?

OLD M. Wake not the slumberer,
Nor kindle and revive
The terrible recurrent power of pain,
My son!

HYL. My foolish words are done,
But my full heart sinks 'neath the heavy strain.

HERACLES. O Father, who are these?
What countrymen? Where am I? What far land
Holds me in pain that ceaseth not? Ah me!
Again that pest is rending me. Pain, pain!

OLD M. Now thou may’st know
’Twas better to have lurked in silent shade
And not thus widely throw
The slumber from his eyelids and his head.

HYL. I could not brook
All speechless on his misery to look.

MONODY.

HER. O altar on the Euboean strand,
High-heaped with offerings from my hand,
What meed for lavish gifts bestowed
From thy new sanctuary hath flowed!
Father of Gods! thy cruel power
Hath foiled me with an evil blight.
Ah! would mine eyes had closed in night
Ere madness in a fatal hour
Had burst upon them with a blaze,
No help or soothing once allays!

What hand to heal, what voice to charm,
Can e’er dispel this hideous harm?
Whose skill save thine,
Monarch Divine?
Mine eyes, if such I saw,
Would hail him from afar with trembling awe.
[1004-1040] Ah! ah!
O vex me not, touch me not, leave me to rest,
To sleep my last sleep on Earth’s gentle breast.
You touch me, you press me, you turn me again,
You break me, you kill me! O pain! O pain!
You have kindled the pang that had slumbered still.
It comes, it hath seized me with tyrannous will!

Where are ye, men, whom over Hellas wide
This arm hath freed, and o’er the ocean-tide,
And through rough brakes, from every monstrous thing?
Yet now in mine affliction none will bring
A sword to aid, a fire to quell this fire,

O most unrighteous! nor to my desire
Will come and quench the hateful life I hold
With mortal stroke! Ah! is there none so bold?

OLD M. Son of our hero, this hath mounted past
My feeble force to cope with. Take him thou!
Fresher thine eye and more the hope thou hast
Than mine to save him.

HYL. I support him now
Thus with mine arm: but neither fleshly vest
Nor inmost spirit can I lull to rest
From torture. None may dream
To wield this power, save he, the King supreme.

HER. Son!
Where art thou to lift me and hold me aright?
It tears me, it kills me, it rushes in might,
This cruel, devouring, unconquered pain
Shoots forth to consume me. Again! again!
O Fate! O Athena! — O son, at my word
Have pity and slay me with merciful sword!

Pity thy father, boy; with sharp relief
Smite on my breast, and heal the wrathful grief
Wherewith thy mother, God-abandoned wife,
Hath wrought this ruin on her husband's life.
O may I see her falling, even so
As she hath thrown me, to like depth of woe!
[1041-1080] Sweet Hades, with swift death,
Brother of Zeus, release my suffering breath!

CH. Horror hath caught me as I hear this, woe,
Racking our mighty one with mightier pain.

HER. Many hot toils and hard beyond report,
With sturdy thews and sinews I have borne,
But no such labour hath the Thunderer's wife
Or sour Eurystheus ever given, as this,
Which Oeneus' daughter of the treacherous eye

Hath fastened on my back, this amply-woven
Net of the Furies, that is breaking me.
For, glued unto my side, it hath devoured
My flesh to the bone, and lodging in the lungs
It drains the vital channels, and hath drunk
The fresh life-blood, and ruins all my frame,
Foiled in the tangle of a viewless bond.
Yet me nor War-host, nor Earth's giant brood,
Nor Centaur's monstrous violence could subdue,
Nor Hellas, nor the Stranger, nor all lands
Where I have gone, cleansing the world from harms.
But a soft woman without manhood's strain
Alone and weaponless hath conquered me.
Son, let me know thee mine true-born, nor rate
Thy mother's claim beyond thy sire's, but bring
Thyself from out the chambers to my hand
Her body that hath borne thee, that my heart
May be assured, if lesser than my pain
It will distress thee to behold her limbs
With righteous torment agonized and torn.
Nay, shrink not, son, but pity me, whom all
May pity — me, who, like a tender girl,
Am heard to weep aloud! This none could say
He knew in me of old; for, murmuring not,
I went with evil fortune, silent still.
Now, such a foe hath found the woman in me!
Ay, but come near; stand by me, and behold
What cause I have for crying. Look but here!
Here is the mystery unveiled. O see!
Ye people, gaze on this poor quivering flesh,
Look with compassion on my misery!
[1081-1117] Ah me!
Ah! ah! Again!
Even now the hot convulsion of disease
Shoots through my side, and will not let me rest
From this fierce exercise of wearing woe.
Take me, O King of Night!
O sudden thunderstroke.
Smite me! O sire, transfix me with the dart

Of thy swift lightning! Yet again that fang
Is tearing; it hath blossomed forth anew,
It soars up to the height!

O breast and back,
O shrivelling arms and hands, ye are the same
That crushed the dweller of the Némean wild,
The lion unapproachable and rude,
The oxherd's plague, and Hydra of the lake
Of Lerna, and the twi-form prancing throng
Of Centaurs, — insolent, unsociable,
Lawless, ungovernable: — the tuskèd pest
Of Erymanthine glades; then underground
Pluto's three-headed cur — a perilous fear,
Born from the monster-worm; and, on the verge
Of Earth, the dragon, guarding fruits of gold.
These toils and others countless I have tried,
And none hath triumphed o'er me. But to-day,
Jointless and riven to tatters, I am wrecked
Thus utterly by imperceptible woe;
I, proudly named Alcmena's child, and His
Who reigns in highest heaven, the King supreme!
Ay, but even yet, I tell ye, even from here,
Where I am nothingness and cannot move,
She who hath done this deed shall feel my power.
Let her come near, that, mastered by my might,
She may have this to tell the world, that, dying,
As living, I gave punishment to wrong.

CH. O Hellas, how I grieve for thy distress!
How thou wilt mourn in losing him we see!

HYL. My father, since thy silence gives me leave,
Still hear me patiently, though in thy pain!
For my request is just. Lend me thy mind
[1117-1149] Less wrathfully distempered than 'tis now;
Else thou canst never know, where thou art keen
With vain resentment and with vain desire

HER. Speak what thou wilt and cease, for I in pain

Catch not the sense of thy mysterious talk

HYL. I come to tell thee of my mother's case,
And her involuntary unconscious fault.

HER. Base villain! hast thou breathed thy mother's name,
Thy father's murderess, in my hearing too!

HYL. Her state requires not silence, but full speech.

HER. Her faults in former time might well be told.

HYL. So might her fault to day, couldst thou but know.

HER. Speak, but beware base words disgrace thee not.

HYL. List! She is dead even now with new-given wound.

HER. By whom? Thy words flash wonder through my woe.

HYL. Her own hand slaughtered her, no foreign stroke.

HER. Wretch! to have reft this office from my hands.

HYL. Even your rash spirit were softened, if you knew.

HER. This bodes some knavery. But declare thy thought!

HYL. She erred with good intent. The whole is said.

HER. Good, O thou villain, to destroy thy sire!

HYL. When she perceived that marriage in her home,
She erred, supposing to enchain thy love.

HER. Hath Trachis a magician of such might?

HYL. Long since the Centaur Nessus moved her mind
To work this charm for heightening thy desire.

HER. O horror, thou art here! I am no more.
My day is darkened, boy! Undone, undone!
I see our plight too plainly. woe is me!
Come, O my son! — thou hast no more a father, —

Call to me all the brethren of thy blood,
And poor Alcmena, wedded all in vain
[1149-1185] Unto the Highest, that ye may hear me tell
With my last breath what prophecies I know.

HYL. Thy mother is not here, but by the shore
Of Tiryns hath obtained a dwelling-place;
And of thy sons, some she hath with her there,
And some inhabit Thebè's citadel.
But we who are with thee, sire, if there be aught
That may by us be done, will hear, and do.

HER. Then hearken thou unto this task, and show
If worthily thou art reputed mine.
Now is time to prove thee. My great father
Forewarned me long ago that I should die
By none who lived and breathed, but from the will
Of one now dwelling in the house of death.
And so this Centaur, as the voice Divine
Then prophesied, in death hath slain me living.
And in agreement with that ancient word
I now interpret newer oracles
Which I wrote down on going within the grove
Of the hill-roving and earth-couching Selli, —
Dictated to me by the mystic tongue
Innumerous, of my Father's sacred tree;
Declaring that my ever instant toils
Should in the time that new hath being and life
End and release me. And I look'd for joy.
But the true meaning plainly was my death. —
No labour is appointed for the dead. —
Then, since all argues one event, my son,
Once more thou must befriend me, and not wait
For my voice goading thee, but of thyself
Submit and second my resolve, and know
Filial obedience for thy noblest rule.

HYL. I will obey thee, father, though my heart
Sinks heavily in approaching such a theme.

HER. Before aught else, lay thy right hand in mine.

HYL. Why so intent on this assurance, sire?

HER. Give it at once and be not froward, boy.

HYL. There is my hand: I will gainsay thee nought.

HER. Swear by the head of him who gave me life.

[1186-1221] HYL. Tell me the oath, and I will utter it.

HER. Swear thou wilt do the thing I bid thee do.

HYL. I swear, and make Zeus witness of my troth.

HER. But if you swerve, pray that the curse may come.

HYL. It will not come for swerving: — but I pray.

HER. Now, dost thou know on Oeta's topmost height
The crag of Zeus?

HYL. I know it, and full oft
Have stood there sacrificing.

HER. Then even there,
With thine own hand uplifting this my body,
Taking what friends thou wilt, and having lopped
Much wood from the deep-rooted oak and rough
Wild olive, lay me on the gathered pile,
And burn all with the touch of pine-wood flame.
Let not a tear of mourning dim thine eye;
But silent, with dry gaze, if thou art mine,
Perform it. Else my curse awaits thee still
To weigh thee down when I am lost in night.

HYL. How cruel, O my father, is thy tongue!

HER. 'Tis peremptory. Else, if thou refuse,
Be called another's and be no more mine.

HYL. Alas that thou shouldst challenge me to this,
To be thy murderer, guilty of thy blood!

To be thy murderer, guilty of thy blood.

HER. Not I, in sooth: but healer of my pain,
And sole preserver from a life of woe.

HYL. How can it heal to burn thee on the pyre?

HER. If this act frighten thee, perform the rest.

HYL. Mine arms shall not refuse to carry thee.

HER. And wilt thou gather the appointed wood?

HYL. So my hand fire it not. In all but this,
Not scanting labour, I will do my part.

HER. Enough. 'Tis well. And having thus much given
Add one small kindness to a list so full.

HYL. How great soe'er it were, it should be done.

HER. The maid of Eurytus thou knowest, I ween.

HYL. Of Iolè thou speak'st, or I mistake.

HER. Of her. This then is all I urge, my son.
[1222-1258] When I am dead, if thou wouldst show thy duty,
Think of thine oath to me, and, on my word,
Make her thy wife: nor let another man
Take her, but only thou; since she hath lain
So near this heart. Obey me, O my boy!
And be thyself the maker of this bond.
To spurn at trifles after great things given,
Were to confound the meed already won.

HYL. Oh, anger is not right, when men are ill!
But who could bear to see thee in this mind?

HER. You murmur, as you meant to disobey.

HYL. How can I do it, when my mother's death
And thy sad state sprang solely from this girl?
Who, not possessed with furies, could choose this?
Far better, father, for me too to die,

Than to live still with my worst enemy.

HER. This youth withdraws his reverence in my death.
But, if thou yield'st not to thy father's best,
The curse from Heaven shall dog thy footsteps still.

HYL. Ah! thou wilt tell me that thy pain is come.

HER. Yea, for thou wak'st the torment that had slept.

HYL. Ay me! how cross and doubtful is my way!

HER. Because you will reject your father's word.

HYL. Must I be taught impiety from thee?

HER. It is not impious to content my heart.

HYL. Then you require this with an absolute will?

HER. And bid Heaven witness to my strong command.

HYL. Then I will do it, for the act is thine.
I will not cast it off. Obeying thee,
My sire, the Gods will ne'er reprove my deed.

HER. Thou endest fairly. Now, then, O my son,
Add the performance swiftly, that, before
Some spasm or furious onset of my pain
Have seized me, ye may place me on the pyre.
Come, loiter not, but lift me. Now my end
Is near, the last cessation of my woe.

HYL. Since thy command is urgent, O my sire!
We tarry not, but bear thee to the pyre.

[1259-1278] HER. Stubborn heart, ere yet again
Wakes the fierce rebound of pain,
While the evil holds aloof,
Thou, with bit of diamond proof,
Curb thy cry, with forcèd will
Seeming to do gladly still!

HYL. Lift him, men, and hate not me

HYL. Lift him, men, and hate not me
For the evil deeds ye see,
Since the Heavens' relentless sway
Recks not of the righteous way.
He who gave life and doth claim
From his seed a Father's name
Can behold this hour of blame.
Though the future none can tell,
Yet the present is not well:
Sore for him who bears the blow,
Sad for us who feel his woe,
Shameful to the Gods, we trow.

CH. Maidens from the palace-hall,
Come ye forth, too, at our call!
Mighty deaths beyond belief,
Many an unknown form of grief,
Ye have seen to-day; and nought
But the power of Zeus hath wrought.

OEDIPUS THE KING

Translated by F. Storr

Regarded by many as the greatest ancient tragedy of them all, *Oedipus the King* was first performed in 429 BC. Surprisingly, the trilogy containing the play took second prize in the City Dionysia at its original performance. Aeschylus' nephew Philocles took first prize at that competition, though his works are now all lost and forgotten. In his *Poetics*, Aristotle considered *Oedipus the King* to be the tragedy which best matched his prescription for how drama should be made. Sophocles' famous play is celebrated for being a model example of a perfectly structured tragedy, exploring the subtle development of the tragic hero's plunge into maddened grief.

The second of Sophocles' three Theban plays, *Oedipus the King* is the first in chronological order, followed by *Oedipus at Colonus* and then *Antigone*. The tragedy chronicles the story of the man destined from birth to murder his father and marry his mother. The play is an example of a classic tragedy, noticeably containing an emphasis on how Oedipus' own faults contribute to the tragic hero's downfall, as opposed to fate being the sole cause. The protagonist of the tragedy is the son of King Laius and Queen Jocasta of Thebes. After Laius learns from an oracle that he is doomed to perish by the hand of his own son, he tightly binds the feet of the infant together with a pin and orders Jocasta to kill the infant. Hesitant to do so, she orders a servant to commit the act for her. Instead, the servant takes the baby to a mountain top to die from exposure. A shepherd rescues the infant and names him Oedipus ("swollen feet"). The shepherd carries the baby with him to Corinth, where Oedipus is taken in and raised in the court of the childless King Polybus of Corinth as if he were his own.

As a young man in Corinth, Oedipus hears a rumour that he is not the natural son of Polybus and his wife Merope. When Oedipus questions the King and Queen, they deny it, but, still suspicious, he asks the Delphic Oracle who his parents really are. The Oracle ignores this question, telling him instead that he is destined to "Mate with his own mother, and shed/With his own hands the blood of his own sire". Desperate to avoid his foretold fate, Oedipus leaves Corinth in the belief that Polybus and Merope are indeed his true parents and that, once away from them, he will never harm them.

On the road to Thebes, he meets Laius, his true father. Unaware of each other's identities, they quarrel over whose chariot has right-of-way. King Laius

moves to strike the insolent youth with his sceptre, but Oedipus throws him down from the chariot and kills him, thus fulfilling part of the oracle's prophecy. He kills all but one of the other men. Shortly after, Oedipus solves the riddle of the Sphinx, which has baffled many a diviner: "What is the creature that walks on four legs in the morning, two legs at noon, and three in the evening?" To this Oedipus replies, "Man" (who crawls on all fours as an infant, walks upright later, and needs a walking stick in old age), and the distraught Sphinx throws herself off the cliffside. Oedipus' reward for freeing the kingdom of Thebes from her curse is the kingship and the hand of Queen Dowager Jocasta, his biological mother. The prophecy is thus fulfilled, although none of the main characters are aware of this.

As the play begins, a priest and the chorus of Thebans arrive at the palace to call upon King Oedipus to aid them with the plague. Oedipus had sent his brother-in-law Creon to ask help of the oracle at Delphi, and he returns at that moment. Creon says the plague is the result of religious pollution, caused because the murderer of their former King, Laius, had never been caught. Oedipus vows to find the murderer and curses him for the plague that he has caused.

Oedipus summons the blind prophet Tiresias for help. When Tiresias arrives he claims to know the answers to Oedipus' questions, but refuses to speak, instead telling Oedipus to abandon his search. Oedipus is enraged by Tiresias' refusal, and says the prophet must be complicit in the murder. Outraged, Tiresias tells the king that Oedipus himself is the murderer. Oedipus cannot see how this could be and concludes that the prophet must have been paid off by Creon in an attempt to undermine him. The two argue vehemently and eventually Tiresias leaves, muttering darkly that when the murderer is discovered he shall be a native citizen of Thebes; brother and father to his own children and son and husband to his own mother.

Creon arrives to face Oedipus' accusations. The King demands that Creon be executed, however the chorus convinces him to let Creon live. Jocasta enters and attempts to comfort Oedipus, telling him he should take no notice of prophets. Many years ago she and Laius received an oracle that never came true. It was said that Laius would be killed by his own son, but, as all Thebes knows, Laius was killed by bandits at a crossroads on the way to Delphi.

The mention of this crossroads causes Oedipus to pause and ask for more details. He asks Jocasta what Laius looked like and Oedipus suddenly becomes worried that Tiresias' accusations were true. Oedipus then sends for the one surviving witness of the attack to be brought to the palace from the fields where he now works as a shepherd. Jocasta, confused, asks Oedipus what the matter is

and he tells her. Many years ago, at a banquet in Corinth, a man drunkenly accused Oedipus of not being his father's son. Bothered by the remark Oedipus went to Delphi and asked the oracle about his parentage. Instead of answers he was given a prophecy that he would one day murder his father and lie with his mother. Upon hearing this he resolved to leave Corinth and never return. While travelling he came to the very crossroads where Laius was killed, and encountered a carriage which attempted to drive him off the road. An argument ensued and Oedipus killed the travellers, including a man who matches Jocasta's description of Laius. Oedipus has hope, however, because the story is that Laius was murdered by several robbers. If the shepherd confirms that Laius was attacked by many men, then Oedipus is not guilty.

A man arrives from Corinth with the message that Oedipus' father has died. Oedipus, to the surprise of the messenger, is made ecstatic by this news, for it proves one half of the prophecy false, for now he can never kill his father. However, he still fears that he may somehow commit incest with his mother. The messenger, eager to ease Oedipus' mind, tells him not to worry, because Merope was not in fact his real mother.

It emerges that this messenger was formerly a shepherd on Mount Cithaeron and that he was given a baby, which the childless Polybus then adopted. The baby, he says, was given to him by another shepherd from the Laius household, who had been told to get rid of the child. Oedipus asks the chorus if anyone knows who this man was or where he might be now. They respond that he is the same shepherd who was witness to the murder of Laius and whom Oedipus had already sent for. Jocasta, who has by now realised the truth, desperately begs Oedipus to stop asking questions, but he refuses and Jocasta runs into the palace.

When the shepherd arrives Oedipus questions him, but he begs to be allowed to leave without answering further. Nevertheless, Oedipus presses him, finally threatening torture and execution. It emerges that the child he gave away was Laius' own son, and that Jocasta had given the baby to the shepherd to secretly be exposed upon the mountainside. This was done in fear of the prophecy that Jocasta said had never come true: that the child would kill its father.

Everything is at last revealed, and Oedipus curses himself and fate before leaving the stage. The chorus laments how even a great man can be felled by fate, and following this, a servant exits the palace to speak of what has happened inside. When Jocasta enters the house, she runs to the palace bedroom and hangs herself. Shortly afterward, Oedipus enters in a fury, calling on his servants to bring him a sword so that he might kill himself. He then rages through the house, until he comes upon Jocasta's body. Giving a cry, Oedipus takes her down and removes the long gold pins that held her dress together, before plunging them

into his own eyes in despair.

Blindly, Oedipus exits the palace and begs to be exiled as soon as possible. Creon enters, saying that Oedipus shall be taken into the house until oracles can be consulted regarding what is best to be done. Oedipus' two daughters, Antigone and Ismene, are sent out, and Oedipus laments that they should be born to such a cursed family. He asks Creon to watch over them and Creon agrees, before sending Oedipus back into the palace. On an empty stage the chorus repeat the common Greek maxim, that no man should be considered fortunate until he is dead.

‘Oedipus after he solves the riddle of the Sphinx’ by Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres

‘Oedipus Separating from Jocasta’ by Alexandre Cabanel

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OEDIPUS THE KING

The actor Louis Bouwmeester as Oedipus in the famous Dutch production of Oedipus the King c. 1896

A Hellenistic marble relief of Sophocles

ARGUMENT

To Laius, King of Thebes, an oracle foretold that the child born to him by his queen Jocasta would slay his father and wed his mother. So when in time a son was born the infant's feet were riveted together and he was left to die on Mount Cithaeron. But a shepherd found the babe and tended him, and delivered him to another shepherd who took him to his master, the King of Corinth. Polybus being childless adopted the boy, who grew up believing that he was indeed the King's son. Afterwards doubting his parentage he inquired of the Delphic god and heard himself the word declared before to Laius. Wherefore he fled from what he deemed his father's house and in his flight he encountered and unwillingly slew his father Laius. Arriving at Thebes he answered the riddle of the Sphinx and the grateful Thebans made their deliverer king. So he reigned in the room of Laius, and espoused the widowed queen. Children were born to them and Thebes prospered under his rule, but again a grievous plague fell upon the city. Again the oracle was consulted and it bade them purge themselves of blood-guiltiness. Oedipus denounces the crime of which he is unaware, and undertakes to track out the criminal. Step by step it is brought home to him that he is the man. The closing scene reveals Jocasta slain by her own hand and Oedipus blinded by his own act and praying for death or exile.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Oedipus.
The Priest of Zeus.
Creon.
Chorus of Theban Elders.
Teiresias.
Jocasta.
Messenger.
Herd of Laius.
Second Messenger.
Scene: Thebes. Before the Palace of Oedipus.

OEDIPUS THE KING

Suppliants of all ages are seated round the altar at the palace doors, at their head a PRIEST OF ZEUS. To them enter OEDIPUS.

OEDIPUS
My children, latest born to Cadmus old,
Why sit ye here as suppliants, in your hands
Branches of olive filleted with wool?
What means this reek of incense everywhere,
And everywhere laments and litanies?
Children, it were not meet that I should learn
From others, and am hither come, myself,
I Oedipus, your world-renowned king.
Ho! aged sire, whose venerable locks
Proclaim thee spokesman of this company,
Explain your mood and purport. Is it dread
Of ill that moves you or a boon ye crave?
My zeal in your behalf ye cannot doubt;
Ruthless indeed were I and obdurate
If such petitioners as you I spurned.

PRIEST
Yea, Oedipus, my sovereign lord and king,
Thou seest how both extremes of age besiege
Thy palace altars — fledglings hardly winged,
and greybeards bowed with years; priests, as am I
of Zeus, and these the flower of our youth.
Meanwhile, the common folk, with wreathed boughs
Crowd our two market-places, or before
Both shrines of Pallas congregate, or where
Ismenus gives his oracles by fire.
For, as thou seest thyself, our ship of State,
Sore buffeted, can no more lift her head,
Foundered beneath a weltering surge of blood.
A blight is on our harvest in the ear,
A blight upon the grazing flocks and herds,
A blight on wives in travail; and withal

Armed with his blazing torch the God of Plague
Hath swooped upon our city emptying
The house of Cadmus, and the murky realm
Of Pluto is full fed with groans and tears.
Therefore, O King, here at thy hearth we sit,
I and these children; not as deeming thee
A new divinity, but the first of men;
First in the common accidents of life,
And first in visitations of the Gods.
Art thou not he who coming to the town
of Cadmus freed us from the tax we paid
To the fell songstress? Nor hadst thou received
Prompting from us or been by others schooled;
No, by a god inspired (so all men deem,
And testify) didst thou renew our life.
And now, O Oedipus, our peerless king,
All we thy votaries beseech thee, find
Some succor, whether by a voice from heaven
Whispered, or haply known by human wit.
Tried counselors, methinks, are aptest found 1
To furnish for the future pregnant rede.
Upraise, O chief of men, upraise our State!
Look to thy laurels! for thy zeal of yore
Our country's savior thou art justly hailed:
O never may we thus record thy reign: —
"He raised us up only to cast us down."
Uplift us, build our city on a rock.
Thy happy star ascendant brought us luck,
O let it not decline! If thou wouldst rule
This land, as now thou reignest, better sure
To rule a peopled than a desert realm.
Nor battlements nor galleys aught avail,
If men to man and guards to guard them tail.

OEDIPUS
Ah! my poor children, known, ah, known too well,
The quest that brings you hither and your need.
Ye sicken all, well wot I, yet my pain,
How great soever yours, outtops it all.

Your sorrow touches each man severally,
Him and none other, but I grieve at once
Both for the general and myself and you.
Therefore ye rouse no sluggard from day-dreams.
Many, my children, are the tears I've wept,
And threaded many a maze of weary thought.
Thus pondering one clue of hope I caught,
And tracked it up; I have sent Menoeceus' son,
Creon, my consort's brother, to inquire
Of Pythian Phoebus at his Delphic shrine,
How I might save the State by act or word.
And now I reckon up the tale of days
Since he set forth, and marvel how he fares.
'Tis strange, this endless tarrying, passing strange.
But when he comes, then I were base indeed,
If I perform not all the god declares.

PRIEST
Thy words are well timed; even as thou speakest
That shouting tells me Creon is at hand.

OEDIPUS
O King Apollo! may his joyous looks
Be presage of the joyous news he brings!

PRIEST
As I surmise, 'tis welcome; else his head
Had scarce been crowned with berry-laden bays.

OEDIPUS
We soon shall know; he's now in earshot range.
[Enter CREON]
My royal cousin, say, Menoeceus' child,
What message hast thou brought us from the god?

CREON
Good news, for e'en intolerable ills,
Finding right issue, tend to naught but good.

OEDIPUS

How runs the oracle? thus far thy words
Give me no ground for confidence or fear.

CREON
If thou wouldst hear my message publicly,
I'll tell thee straight, or with thee pass within.

OEDIPUS
Speak before all; the burden that I bear
Is more for these my subjects than myself.

CREON
Let me report then all the god declared.
King Phoebus bids us straitly extirpate
A fell pollution that infests the land,
And no more harbor an inveterate sore.

OEDIPUS
What expiation means he? What's amiss?

CREON
Banishment, or the shedding blood for blood.
This stain of blood makes shipwreck of our state.

OEDIPUS
Whom can he mean, the miscreant thus denounced?

CREON
Before thou didst assume the helm of State,
The sovereign of this land was Laius.

OEDIPUS
I heard as much, but never saw the man.

CREON
He fell; and now the god's command is plain:
Punish his takers-off, whoe'er they be.

OEDIPUS
Where are they? Where in the wide world to find
The far, faint traces of a bygone crime?

CREON
In this land, said the god; “who seeks shall find;
Who sits with folded hands or sleeps is blind.”

OEDIPUS
Was he within his palace, or afield,
Or traveling, when Laius met his fate?

CREON
Abroad; he started, so he told us, bound
For Delphi, but he never thence returned.

OEDIPUS
Came there no news, no fellow-traveler
To give some clue that might be followed up?

CREON
But one escape, who flying for dear life,
Could tell of all he saw but one thing sure.

OEDIPUS
And what was that? One clue might lead us far,
With but a spark of hope to guide our quest.

CREON
Robbers, he told us, not one bandit but
A troop of knaves, attacked and murdered him.

OEDIPUS
Did any bandit dare so bold a stroke,
Unless indeed he were suborned from Thebes?

CREON
So ’twas surmised, but none was found to avenge
His murder mid the trouble that ensued.

OEDIPUS
What trouble can have hindered a full quest,
When royalty had fallen thus miserably?

CREON
The riddling Sphinx compelled us to let slide

The dim past and attend to instant needs.

OEDIPUS
Well, *I* will start afresh and once again
Make dark things clear. Right worthy the concern
Of Phoebus, worthy thine too, for the dead;
I also, as is meet, will lend my aid
To avenge this wrong to Thebes and to the god.
Not for some far-off kinsman, but myself,
Shall I expel this poison in the blood;
For whoso slew that king might have a mind
To strike me too with his assassin hand.
Therefore in righting him I serve myself.
Up, children, haste ye, quit these altar stairs,
Take hence your suppliant wands, go summon hither
The Theban commons. With the god's good help
Success is sure; 'tis ruin if we fail.
[Exeunt OEDIPUS and CREON]

PRIEST
Come, children, let us hence; these gracious words
Forestall the very purpose of our suit.
And may the god who sent this oracle
Save us withal and rid us of this pest.
[Exeunt PRIEST and SUPPLIANTS]

CHORUS
(Str. 1)
Sweet-voiced daughter of Zeus from thy gold-paved Pythian shrine
   Wafted to Thebes divine,
What dost thou bring me? My soul is racked and shivers with fear.
   (Healer of Delos, hear!)
Hast thou some pain unknown before,
Or with the circling years renewest a penance of yore?
Offspring of golden Hope, thou voice immortal, O tell me.

(Ant. 1)
First on Athene I call; O Zeus-born goddess, defend!
   Goddess and sister, befriend,
Artemis, Lady of Thebes, high-throned in the midst of our mart!

Lord of the death-winged dart!
Your threefold aid I crave
From death and ruin our city to save.
If in the days of old when we nigh had perished, ye drave
From our land the fiery plague, be near us now and defend us!

(Str. 2)
Ah me, what countless woes are mine!
All our host is in decline;
Weaponless my spirit lies.
Earth her gracious fruits denies;
Women wail in barren throes;
Life on life downstriken goes,
Swifter than the wind bird's flight,
Swifter than the Fire-God's might,
To the westering shores of Night.

(Ant. 2)
Wasted thus by death on death
All our city perisheth.
Corpses spread infection round;
None to tend or mourn is found.
Wailing on the altar stair
Wives and grandams rend the air —
Long-drawn moans and piercing cries
Blent with prayers and litanies.
Golden child of Zeus, O hear
Let thine angel face appear!

(Str. 3)
And grant that Ares whose hot breath I feel,
Though without targe or steel
He stalks, whose voice is as the battle shout,
May turn in sudden rout,
To the unharbored Thracian waters sped,
Or Amphitrite's bed.
For what night leaves undone,
Smit by the morrow's sun
Perisheth. Father Zeus, whose hand
Doth wield the lightning brand,

Slay him beneath thy levin bold, we pray,
Slay him, O slay!

(Ant. 3)
O that thine arrows too, Lycean King,
From that taut bow's gold string,
Might fly abroad, the champions of our rights;
Yea, and the flashing lights
Of Artemis, wherewith the huntress sweeps
Across the Lycian steeps.
Thee too I call with golden-snooded hair,
Whose name our land doth bear,
Bacchus to whom thy Maenads Evoe shout;
Come with thy bright torch, rout,
Blithe god whom we adore,
The god whom gods abhor.

[Enter OEDIPUS.]
OEDIPUS
Ye pray; 'tis well, but would ye hear my words
And heed them and apply the remedy,
Ye might perchance find comfort and relief.
Mind you, I speak as one who comes a stranger
To this report, no less than to the crime;
For how unaided could I track it far
Without a clue? Which lacking (for too late
Was I enrolled a citizen of Thebes)
This proclamation I address to all: —
Thebans, if any knows the man by whom
Laius, son of Labdacus, was slain,
I summon him to make clean shrift to me.
And if he shrinks, let him reflect that thus
Confessing he shall 'scape the capital charge;
For the worst penalty that shall befall him
Is banishment — unscathed he shall depart.
But if an alien from a foreign land
Be known to any as the murderer,
Let him who knows speak out, and he shall have
Due recompense from me and thanks to boot.

But if ye still keep silence, if through fear
For self or friends ye disregard my hest,
Hear what I then resolve; I lay my ban
On the assassin whosoe'er he be.
Let no man in this land, whereof I hold
The sovereign rule, harbor or speak to him;
Give him no part in prayer or sacrifice
Or lustral rites, but hound him from your homes.
For this is our defilement, so the god
Hath lately shown to me by oracles.
Thus as their champion I maintain the cause
Both of the god and of the murdered King.
And on the murderer this curse I lay
(On him and all the partners in his guilt): —
Wretch, may he pine in utter wretchedness!
And for myself, if with my privity
He gain admittance to my hearth, I pray
The curse I laid on others fall on me.
See that ye give effect to all my hest,
For my sake and the god's and for our land,
A desert blasted by the wrath of heaven.
For, let alone the god's express command,
It were a scandal ye should leave unpurged
The murder of a great man and your king,
Nor track it home. And now that I am lord,
Successor to his throne, his bed, his wife,
(And had he not been frustrate in the hope
Of issue, common children of one womb
Had forced a closer bond twixt him and me,
But Fate swooped down upon him), therefore I
His blood-avenger will maintain his cause
As though he were my sire, and leave no stone
Unturned to track the assassin or avenge
The son of Labdacus, of Polydore,
Of Cadmus, and Agenor first of the race.
And for the disobedient thus I pray:
May the gods send them neither timely fruits
Of earth, nor teeming increase of the womb,
But may they waste and pine, as now they waste,

Aye and worse stricken; but to all of you,
My loyal subjects who approve my acts,
May Justice, our ally, and all the gods
Be gracious and attend you evermore.

CHORUS
The oath thou profferest, sire, I take and swear.
I slew him not myself, nor can I name
The slayer. For the quest, ‘twere well, methinks
That Phoebus, who proposed the riddle, himself
Should give the answer — who the murderer was.

OEDIPUS
Well argued; but no living man can hope
To force the gods to speak against their will.

CHORUS
May I then say what seems next best to me?

OEDIPUS
Aye, if there be a third best, tell it too.

CHORUS
My liege, if any man sees eye to eye
With our lord Phoebus, ’tis our prophet, lord
Teiresias; he of all men best might guide
A searcher of this matter to the light.

OEDIPUS
Here too my zeal has nothing lagged, for twice
At Creon’s instance have I sent to fetch him,
And long I marvel why he is not here.

CHORUS
I mind me too of rumors long ago —
Mere gossip.

OEDIPUS
Tell them, I would fain know all.

CHORUS

’Twas said he fell by travelers.

OEDIPUS
So I heard,
But none has seen the man who saw him fall.

CHORUS
Well, if he knows what fear is, he will quail
And flee before the terror of thy curse.

OEDIPUS
Words scare not him who blenches not at deeds.

CHORUS
But here is one to arraign him. Lo, at length
They bring the god-inspired seer in whom
Above all other men is truth inborn.
[Enter TEIRESIAS, led by a boy.]

OEDIPUS
Teiresias, seer who comprehendest all,
Lore of the wise and hidden mysteries,
High things of heaven and low things of the earth,
Thou knowest, though thy blinded eyes see naught,
What plague infects our city; and we turn
To thee, O seer, our one defense and shield.
The purport of the answer that the God
Returned to us who sought his oracle,
The messengers have doubtless told thee — how
One course alone could rid us of the pest,
To find the murderers of Laius,
And slay them or expel them from the land.
Therefore begrudging neither augury
Nor other divination that is thine,
O save thyself, thy country, and thy king,
Save all from this defilement of blood shed.
On thee we rest. This is man’s highest end,
To others’ service all his powers to lend.

TEIRESIAS

Alas, alas, what misery to be wise
When wisdom profits nothing! This old lore
I had forgotten; else I were not here.

OEDIPUS
What ails thee? Why this melancholy mood?

TEIRESIAS
Let me go home; prevent me not; ‘twere best
That thou shouldst bear thy burden and I mine.

OEDIPUS
For shame! no true-born Theban patriot
Would thus withhold the word of prophecy.

TEIRESIAS
Thy words, O king, are wide of the mark, and I
For fear lest I too trip like thee...

OEDIPUS
Oh speak,
Withhold not, I adjure thee, if thou know’st,
Thy knowledge. We are all thy suppliants.

TEIRESIAS
Aye, for ye all are witless, but my voice
Will ne’er reveal my miseries — or thine. 2

OEDIPUS
What then, thou knowest, and yet willst not speak!
Wouldst thou betray us and destroy the State?

TEIRESIAS
I will not vex myself nor thee. Why ask
Thus idly what from me thou shalt not learn?

OEDIPUS
Monster! thy silence would incense a flint.
Will nothing loose thy tongue? Can nothing melt thee,
Or shake thy dogged taciturnity?

TEIRESIAS

Thou blam’st my mood and seest not thine own
Wherewith thou art mated; no, thou taxest me.

OEDIPUS
And who could stay his choler when he heard
How insolently thou dost flout the State?

TEIRESIAS
Well, it will come what will, though I be mute.

OEDIPUS
Since come it must, thy duty is to tell me.

TEIRESIAS
I have no more to say; storm as thou willst,
And give the rein to all thy pent-up rage.

OEDIPUS
Yea, I am wroth, and will not stint my words,
But speak my whole mind. Thou methinks thou art he,
Who planned the crime, aye, and performed it too,
All save the assassination; and if thou
Hadst not been blind, I had been sworn to boot
That thou alone didst do the bloody deed.

TEIRESIAS
Is it so? Then I charge thee to abide
By thine own proclamation; from this day
Speak not to these or me. Thou art the man,
Thou the accursed polluter of this land.

OEDIPUS
Vile slanderer, thou blurtest forth these taunts,
And think’st forsooth as seer to go scot free.

TEIRESIAS
Yea, I am free, strong in the strength of truth.

OEDIPUS
Who was thy teacher? not methinks thy art.

TEIRESIAS

Thou, goading me against my will to speak.

OEDIPUS
What speech? repeat it and resolve my doubt.

TEIRESIAS
Didst miss my sense wouldst thou goad me on?

OEDIPUS
I but half caught thy meaning; say it again.

TEIRESIAS
I say thou art the murderer of the man
Whose murderer thou pursuest.

OEDIPUS
Thou shalt rue it
Twice to repeat so gross a calumny.

TEIRESIAS
Must I say more to aggravate thy rage?

OEDIPUS
Say all thou wilt; it will be but waste of breath.

TEIRESIAS
I say thou livest with thy nearest kin
In infamy, unwitting in thy shame.

OEDIPUS
Think’st thou for aye unscathed to wag thy tongue?

TEIRESIAS
Yea, if the might of truth can aught prevail.
OEDIPUS
With other men, but not with thee, for thou
In ear, wit, eye, in everything art blind.

TEIRESIAS
Poor fool to utter gibes at me which all
Here present will cast back on thee ere long.

OEDIPUS
Offspring of endless Night, thou hast no power
O’er me or any man who sees the sun.

TEIRESIAS
No, for thy weird is not to fall by me.
I leave to Apollo what concerns the god.

OEDIPUS
Is this a plot of Creon, or thine own?

TEIRESIAS
Not Creon, thou thyself art thine own bane.

OEDIPUS
O wealth and empiry and skill by skill
Outwitted in the battlefield of life,
What spite and envy follow in your train!
See, for this crown the State conferred on me.
A gift, a thing I sought not, for this crown
The trusty Creon, my familiar friend,
Hath lain in wait to oust me and suborned
This mountebank, this juggling charlatan,
This tricksy beggar-priest, for gain alone
Keen-eyed, but in his proper art stone-blind.
Say, sirrah, hast thou ever proved thyself
A prophet? When the riddling Sphinx was here
Why hadst thou no deliverance for this folk?
And yet the riddle was not to be solved
By guess-work but required the prophet’s art;
Wherein thou wast found lacking; neither birds
Nor sign from heaven helped thee, but *I* came,
The simple Oedipus; *I* stopped her mouth
By mother wit, untaught of auguries.
This is the man whom thou wouldst undermine,
In hope to reign with Creon in my stead.
Methinks that thou and thine abettor soon
Will rue your plot to drive the scapegoat out.
Thank thy grey hairs that thou hast still to learn
What chastisement such arrogance deserves.

CHORUS
To us it seems that both the seer and thou,
O Oedipus, have spoken angry words.
This is no time to wrangle but consult
How best we may fulfill the oracle.

TEIRESIAS
King as thou art, free speech at least is mine
To make reply; in this I am thy peer.
I own no lord but Loxias; him I serve
And ne'er can stand enrolled as Creon's man.
Thus then I answer: since thou hast not spared
To twit me with my blindness — thou hast eyes,
Yet see'st not in what misery thou art fallen,
Nor where thou dwellest nor with whom for mate.
Dost know thy lineage? Nay, thou know'st it not,
And all unwitting art a double foe
To thine own kin, the living and the dead;
Aye and the dogging curse of mother and sire
One day shall drive thee, like a two-edged sword,
Beyond our borders, and the eyes that now
See clear shall henceforward endless night.
Ah whither shall thy bitter cry not reach,
What crag in all Cithaeron but shall then
Reverberate thy wail, when thou hast found
With what a hymeneal thou wast borne
Home, but to no fair haven, on the gale!
Aye, and a flood of ills thou guessest not
Shall set thyself and children in one line.
Flout then both Creon and my words, for none
Of mortals shall be striken worse than thou.

OEDIPUS
Must I endure this fellow's insolence?
A murrain on thee! Get thee hence! Begone
Avaunt! and never cross my threshold more.

TEIRESIAS
I ne'er had come hadst thou not bidden me.

OEDIPUS
I know not thou wouldst utter folly, else
Long hadst thou waited to be summoned here.

TEIRESIAS
Such am I — as it seems to thee a fool,
But to the parents who begat thee, wise.

OEDIPUS
What sayest thou— “parents”? Who begat me, speak?

TEIRESIAS
This day shall be thy birth-day, and thy grave.

OEDIPUS
Thou lov’st to speak in riddles and dark words.

TEIRESIAS
In reading riddles who so skilled as thou?

OEDIPUS
Twit me with that wherein my greatness lies.

TEIRESIAS
And yet this very greatness proved thy bane.

OEDIPUS
No matter if I saved the commonwealth.

TEIRESIAS
’Tis time I left thee. Come, boy, take me home.

OEDIPUS
Aye, take him quickly, for his presence irks
And lets me; gone, thou canst not plague me more.

TEIRESIAS
I go, but first will tell thee why I came.
Thy frown I dread not, for thou canst not harm me.
Hear then: this man whom thou hast sought to arrest
With threats and warrants this long while, the wretch
Who murdered Laius — that man is here.

He passes for an alien in the land
But soon shall prove a Theban, native born.
And yet his fortune brings him little joy;
For blind of seeing, clad in beggar's weeds,
For purple robes, and leaning on his staff,
To a strange land he soon shall grope his way.
And of the children, inmates of his home,
He shall be proved the brother and the sire,
Of her who bare him son and husband both,
Co-partner, and assassin of his sire.
Go in and ponder this, and if thou find
That I have missed the mark, henceforth declare
I have no wit nor skill in prophecy.
[Exeunt TEIRESIAS and OEDIPUS]

CHORUS
(Str. 1)
Who is he by voice immortal named from Pythia's rocky cell,
Doer of foul deeds of bloodshed, horrors that no tongue can tell?
A foot for flight he needs
Fleeter than storm-swift steeds,
For on his heels doth follow,
Armed with the lightnings of his Sire, Apollo.
Like sleuth-hounds too
The Fates pursue.

(Ant. 1)
Yea, but now flashed forth the summons from Parnassus' snowy peak,
"Near and far the undiscovered doer of this murder seek!"
Now like a sullen bull he roves
Through forest brakes and upland groves,
And vainly seeks to fly
The doom that ever nigh
Flits o'er his head,
Still by the avenging Phoebus sped,
The voice divine,
From Earth's mid shrine.
(Str. 2)
Sore perplexed am I by the words of the master seer.

Are they true, are they false? I know not and bridle my tongue for fear,
Fluttered with vague surmise; nor present nor future is clear.
Quarrel of ancient date or in days still near know I none
Twixt the Labdacidan house and our ruler, Polybus' son.
Proof is there none: how then can I challenge our King's good name,
How in a blood-feud join for an untracked deed of shame?

(Ant. 2)
All wise are Zeus and Apollo, and nothing is hid from their ken;
They are gods; and in wits a man may surpass his fellow men;
But that a mortal seer knows more than I know — where
Hath this been proven? Or how without sign assured, can I blame
Him who saved our State when the winged songstress came,
Tested and tried in the light of us all, like gold assayed?
How can I now assent when a crime is on Oedipus laid?

CREON
Friends, countrymen, I learn King Oedipus
Hath laid against me a most grievous charge,
And come to you protesting. If he deems
That I have harmed or injured him in aught
By word or deed in this our present trouble,
I care not to prolong the span of life,
Thus ill-reputed; for the calumny
Hits not a single blot, but blasts my name,
If by the general voice I am denounced
False to the State and false by you my friends.

CHORUS
This taunt, it well may be, was blurted out
In petulance, not spoken advisedly.

CREON
Did any dare pretend that it was I
Prompted the seer to utter a forged charge?

CHORUS
Such things were said; with what intent I know not.

CREON
Were not his wits and vision all astray
When upon me he fixed this monstrous charge?

CHORUS
I know not; to my sovereign's acts I am blind.
But lo, he comes to answer for himself.
[Enter OEDIPUS.]

OEDIPUS
Sirrah, what mak'st thou here? Dost thou presume
To approach my doors, thou brazen-faced rogue,
My murderer and the filcher of my crown?
Come, answer this, didst thou detect in me
Some touch of cowardice or witlessness,
That made thee undertake this enterprise?
I seemed forsooth too simple to perceive
The serpent stealing on me in the dark,
Or else too weak to scotch it when I saw.
This *thou* art witless seeking to possess
Without a following or friends the crown,
A prize that followers and wealth must win.

CREON
Attend me. Thou hast spoken, 'tis my turn
To make reply. Then having heard me, judge.

OEDIPUS
Thou art glib of tongue, but I am slow to learn
Of thee; I know too well thy venomous hate.

CREON
First I would argue out this very point.

OEDIPUS
O argue not that thou art not a rogue.

CREON
If thou dost count a virtue stubbornness,
Unschooled by reason, thou art much astray.

OEDIPUS
If thou dost hold a kinsman may be wronged,
And no pains follow, thou art much to seek.

CREON
Therein thou judgest rightly, but this wrong
That thou allegest — tell me what it is.

OEDIPUS
Didst thou or didst thou not advise that I
Should call the priest?

CREON
Yes, and I stand to it.

OEDIPUS
Tell me how long is it since Laius...

CREON
Since Laius...? I follow not thy drift.

OEDIPUS
By violent hands was spirited away.

CREON
In the dim past, a many years agone.

OEDIPUS
Did the same prophet then pursue his craft?

CREON
Yes, skilled as now and in no less repute.

OEDIPUS
Did he at that time ever glance at me?

CREON
Not to my knowledge, not when I was by.

OEDIPUS
But was no search and inquisition made?

CREON

Surely full quest was made, but nothing learnt.

OEDIPUS
Why failed the seer to tell his story *then*?

CREON
I know not, and not knowing hold my tongue.

OEDIPUS
This much thou knowest and canst surely tell.

CREON
What's mean'st thou? All I know I will declare.

OEDIPUS
But for thy prompting never had the seer
Ascribed to me the death of Laius.

CREON
If so he thou knowest best; but I
Would put thee to the question in my turn.

OEDIPUS
Question and prove me murderer if thou canst.

CREON
Then let me ask thee, didst thou wed my sister?

OEDIPUS
A fact so plain I cannot well deny.

CREON
And as thy consort queen she shares the throne?

OEDIPUS
I grant her freely all her heart desires.

CREON
And with you twain I share the triple rule?

OEDIPUS
Yea, and it is that proves thee a false friend.

CREON
Not so, if thou wouldst reason with thyself,
As I with myself. First, I bid thee think,
Would any mortal choose a troubled reign
Of terrors rather than secure repose,
If the same power were given him? As for me,
I have no natural craving for the name
Of king, preferring to do kingly deeds,
And so thinks every sober-minded man.
Now all my needs are satisfied through thee,
And I have naught to fear; but were I king,
My acts would oft run counter to my will.
How could a title then have charms for me
Above the sweets of boundless influence?
I am not so infatuate as to grasp
The shadow when I hold the substance fast.
Now all men cry me Godspeed! wish me well,
And every suitor seeks to gain my ear,
If he would hope to win a grace from thee.
Why should I leave the better, choose the worse?
That were sheer madness, and I am not mad.
No such ambition ever tempted me,
Nor would I have a share in such intrigue.
And if thou doubt me, first to Delphi go,
There ascertain if my report was true
Of the god's answer; next investigate
If with the seer I plotted or conspired,
And if it prove so, sentence me to death,
Not by thy voice alone, but mine and thine.
But O condemn me not, without appeal,
On bare suspicion. 'Tis not right to adjudge
Bad men at random good, or good men bad.
I would as lief a man should cast away
The thing he counts most precious, his own life,
As spurn a true friend. Thou wilt learn in time
The truth, for time alone reveals the just;
A villain is detected in a day.

CHORUS

To one who walketh warily his words
Commend themselves; swift counsels are not sure.

OEDIPUS
When with swift strides the stealthy plotter stalks
I must be quick too with my counterplot.
To wait his onset passively, for him
Is sure success, for me assured defeat.

CREON
What then's thy will? To banish me the land?

OEDIPUS
I would not have thee banished, no, but dead,
That men may mark the wages envy reaps.

CREON
I see thou wilt not yield, nor credit me.

OEDIPUS
[None but a fool would credit such as thou.] 3

CREON
Thou art not wise.

OEDIPUS
Wise for myself at least.

CREON
Why not for me too?

OEDIPUS
Why for such a knave?

CREON
Suppose thou lackest sense.

OEDIPUS
Yet kings must rule.

CREON
Not if they rule ill.

OEDIPUS
Oh my Thebans, hear him!

CREON
Thy Thebans? am not I a Theban too?

CHORUS
Cease, princes; lo there comes, and none too soon,
Jocasta from the palace. Who so fit
As peacemaker to reconcile your feud?
[Enter JOCASTA.]

JOCASTA
Misguided princes, why have ye upraised
This wordy wrangle? Are ye not ashamed,
While the whole land lies striken, thus to voice
Your private injuries? Go in, my lord;
Go home, my brother, and forebear to make
A public scandal of a petty grief.

CREON
My royal sister, Oedipus, thy lord,
Hath bid me choose (O dread alternative!)
An outlaw's exile or a felon's death.

OEDIPUS
Yes, lady; I have caught him practicing
Against my royal person his vile arts.

CREON
May I ne'er speed but die accursed, if I
In any way am guilty of this charge.

JOCASTA
Believe him, I adjure thee, Oedipus,
First for his solemn oath's sake, then for mine,
And for thine elders' sake who wait on thee.

CHORUS
(Str. 1)
Hearken, King, reflect, we pray thee, but not stubborn but relent.

OEDIPUS
Say to what should I consent?

CHORUS
Respect a man whose probity and troth
Are known to all and now confirmed by oath.

OEDIPUS
Dost know what grace thou cravest?

CHORUS
Yea, I know.

OEDIPUS
Declare it then and make thy meaning plain.

CHORUS
Brand not a friend whom babbling tongues assail;
Let not suspicion ‘gainst his oath prevail.

OEDIPUS
Bethink you that in seeking this ye seek
In very sooth my death or banishment?

CHORUS
No, by the leader of the host divine!
(Str. 2)
Witness, thou Sun, such thought was never mine,
Unblest, unfriended may I perish,
If ever I such wish did cherish!
But O my heart is desolate
Musing on our striken State,
Doubly fall’n should discord grow
Twixt you twain, to crown our woe.

OEDIPUS
Well, let him go, no matter what it cost me,
Or certain death or shameful banishment,
For your sake I relent, not his; and him,
Where’er he be, my heart shall still abhor.

CREON
Thou art as sullen in thy yielding mood
As in thine anger thou wast truculent.
Such tempers justly plague themselves the most.

OEDIPUS
Leave me in peace and get thee gone.

CREON
I go,
By thee misjudged, but justified by these.
[Exeunt CREON]

CHORUS
(Ant. 1)
Lady, lead indoors thy consort; wherefore longer here delay?

JOCASTA
Tell me first how rose the fray.

CHORUS
Rumors bred unjust suspicious and injustice rankles sore.

JOCASTA
Were both at fault?

CHORUS
Both.

JOCASTA
What was the tale?

CHORUS
Ask me no more. The land is sore distressed;
‘Twere better sleeping ills to leave at rest.

OEDIPUS
Strange counsel, friend! I know thou mean’st me well,
And yet would’st mitigate and blunt my zeal.

CHORUS
(Ant. 2)

King, I say it once again,
Witless were I proved, insane,
If I lightly put away
Thee my country's prop and stay,
Pilot who, in danger sought,
To a quiet haven brought
Our distracted State; and now
Who can guide us right but thou?

JOCASTA
Let me too, I adjure thee, know, O king,
What cause has stirred this unrelenting wrath.

OEDIPUS
I will, for thou art more to me than these.
Lady, the cause is Creon and his plots.

JOCASTA
But what provoked the quarrel? make this clear.

OEDIPUS
He points me out as Laius' murderer.

JOCASTA
Of his own knowledge or upon report?

OEDIPUS
He is too cunning to commit himself,
And makes a mouthpiece of a knavish seer.

JOCASTA
Then thou mayest ease thy conscience on that score.
Listen and I'll convince thee that no man
Hath scot or lot in the prophetic art.
Here is the proof in brief. An oracle
Once came to Laius (I will not say
'Twas from the Delphic god himself, but from
His ministers) declaring he was doomed
To perish by the hand of his own son,
A child that should be born to him by me.
Now Laius — so at least report affirmed —

Was murdered on a day by highwaymen,
No natives, at a spot where three roads meet.
As for the child, it was but three days old,
When Laius, its ankles pierced and pinned
Together, gave it to be cast away
By others on the trackless mountain side.
So then Apollo brought it not to pass
The child should be his father's murderer,
Or the dread terror find accomplishment,
And Laius be slain by his own son.
Such was the prophet's horoscope. O king,
Regard it not. Whate'er the god deems fit
To search, himself unaided will reveal.

OEDIPUS
What memories, what wild tumult of the soul
Came o'er me, lady, as I heard thee speak!

JOCASTA
What mean'st thou? What has shocked and startled thee?

OEDIPUS
Methought I heard thee say that Laius
Was murdered at the meeting of three roads.

JOCASTA
So ran the story that is current still.

OEDIPUS
Where did this happen? Dost thou know the place?

JOCASTA
Phocis the land is called; the spot is where
Branch roads from Delphi and from Daulis meet.

OEDIPUS
And how long is it since these things befell?

JOCASTA
'Twas but a brief while were thou wast proclaimed
Our country's ruler that the news was brought.

OEDIPUS
O Zeus, what hast thou willed to do with me!

JOCASTA
What is it, Oedipus, that moves thee so?

OEDIPUS
Ask me not yet; tell me the build and height
Of Laius? Was he still in manhood's prime?

JOCASTA
Tall was he, and his hair was lightly strewn
With silver; and not unlike thee in form.

OEDIPUS
O woe is me! Mehtinks unwittingly
I laid but now a dread curse on myself.

JOCASTA
What say'st thou? When I look upon thee, my king,
I tremble.

OEDIPUS
'Tis a dread presentiment
That in the end the seer will prove not blind.
One further question to resolve my doubt.

JOCASTA
I quail; but ask, and I will answer all.

OEDIPUS
Had he but few attendants or a train
Of armed retainers with him, like a prince?

JOCASTA
They were but five in all, and one of them
A herald; Laius in a mule-car rode.

OEDIPUS
Alas! 'tis clear as noonday now. But say,
Lady, who carried this report to Thebes?

JOCASTA
A serf, the sole survivor who returned.

OEDIPUS
Haply he is at hand or in the house?

JOCASTA
No, for as soon as he returned and found
Thee reigning in the stead of Laius slain,
He clasped my hand and supplicated me
To send him to the alps and pastures, where
He might be farthest from the sight of Thebes.
And so I sent him. 'Twas an honest slave
And well deserved some better recompense.

OEDIPUS
Fetch him at once. I fain would see the man.

JOCASTA
He shall be brought; but wherefore summon him?

OEDIPUS
Lady, I fear my tongue has overrun
Discretion; therefore I would question him.

JOCASTA
Well, he shall come, but may not I too claim
To share the burden of thy heart, my king?

OEDIPUS
And thou shalt not be frustrate of thy wish.
Now my imaginings have gone so far.
Who has a higher claim that thou to hear
My tale of dire adventures? Listen then.
My sire was Polybus of Corinth, and
My mother Merope, a Dorian;
And I was held the foremost citizen,
Till a strange thing befell me, strange indeed,
Yet scarce deserving all the heat it stirred.
A roisterer at some banquet, flown with wine,
Shouted "Thou art not true son of thy sire."

It irked me, but I stomached for the nonce
The insult; on the morrow I sought out
My mother and my sire and questioned them.
They were indignant at the random slur
Cast on my parentage and did their best
To comfort me, but still the venomed barb
Rankled, for still the scandal spread and grew.
So privily without their leave I went
To Delphi, and Apollo sent me back
Baulked of the knowledge that I came to seek.
But other grievous things he prophesied,
Woes, lamentations, mourning, portents dire;
To wit I should defile my mother's bed
And raise up seed too loathsome to behold,
And slay the father from whose loins I sprang.
Then, lady, — thou shalt hear the very truth —
As I drew near the triple-branching roads,
A herald met me and a man who sat
In a car drawn by colts — as in thy tale —
The man in front and the old man himself
Threatened to thrust me rudely from the path,
Then jostled by the charioteer in wrath
I struck him, and the old man, seeing this,
Watched till I passed and from his car brought down
Full on my head the double-pointed goad.
Yet was I quits with him and more; one stroke
Of my good staff sufficed to fling him clean
Out of the chariot seat and laid him prone.
And so I slew them every one. But if
Betwixt this stranger there was aught in common
With Laius, who more miserable than I,
What mortal could you find more god-abhorred?
Wretch whom no sojourner, no citizen
May harbor or address, whom all are bound
To harry from their homes. And this same curse
Was laid on me, and laid by none but me.
Yea with these hands all gory I pollute
The bed of him I slew. Say, am I vile?
Am I not utterly unclean, a wretch

Doomed to be banished, and in banishment
Forgo the sight of all my dearest ones,
And never tread again my native earth;
Or else to wed my mother and slay my sire,
Polybus, who begat me and upreared?
If one should say, this is the handiwork
Of some inhuman power, who could blame
His judgment? But, ye pure and awful gods,
Forbid, forbid that I should see that day!
May I be blotted out from living men
Ere such a plague spot set on me its brand!

CHORUS
We too, O king, are troubled; but till thou
Hast questioned the survivor, still hope on.

OEDIPUS
My hope is faint, but still enough survives
To bid me bide the coming of this herd.

JOCASTA
Suppose him here, what wouldst thou learn of him?

OEDIPUS
I'll tell thee, lady; if his tale agrees
With thine, I shall have 'scaped calamity.

JOCASTA
And what of special import did I say?

OEDIPUS
In thy report of what the herdsman said
Laius was slain by robbers; now if he
Still speaks of robbers, not a robber, I
Slew him not; "one" with "many" cannot square.
But if he says one lonely wayfarer,
The last link wanting to my guilt is forged.

JOCASTA
Well, rest assured, his tale ran thus at first,
Nor can he now retract what then he said;

Not I alone but all our townsfolk heard it.
E'en should he vary somewhat in his story,
He cannot make the death of Laius
In any wise jump with the oracle.
For Loxias said expressly he was doomed
To die by my child's hand, but he, poor babe,
He shed no blood, but perished first himself.
So much for divination. Henceforth I
Will look for signs neither to right nor left.

OEDIPUS
Thou reasonest well. Still I would have thee send
And fetch the bondsman hither. See to it.

JOCASTA
That will I straightway. Come, let us within.
I would do nothing that my lord mislikes.
[Exeunt OEDIPUS and JOCASTA]

CHORUS
(Str. 1)
My lot be still to lead
The life of innocence and fly
Irreverence in word or deed,
To follow still those laws ordained on high
Whose birthplace is the bright ethereal sky
No mortal birth they own,
Olympus their progenitor alone:
Ne'er shall they slumber in oblivion cold,
The god in them is strong and grows not old.

(Ant. 1)
Of insolence is bred
The tyrant; insolence full blown,
With empty riches surfeited,
Scales the precipitous height and grasps the throne.
Then topples o'er and lies in ruin prone;
No foothold on that dizzy steep.
But O may Heaven the true patriot keep
Who burns with emulous zeal to serve the State.

God is my help and hope, on him I wait.

(Str. 2)
But the proud sinner, or in word or deed,
That will not Justice heed,
Nor reverence the shrine
Of images divine,
Perdition seize his vain imaginings,
If, urged by greed profane,
He grasps at ill-got gain,
And lays an impious hand on holiest things.
Who when such deeds are done
Can hope heaven's bolts to shun?
If sin like this to honor can aspire,
Why dance I still and lead the sacred choir?

(Ant. 2)
No more I'll seek earth's central oracle,
Or Abae's hallowed cell,
Nor to Olympia bring
My votive offering.
If before all God's truth be not bade plain.
O Zeus, reveal thy might,
King, if thou'rt named aright
Omnipotent, all-seeing, as of old;
For Laius is forgot;
His weird, men heed it not;
Apollo is forsook and faith grows cold.
[Enter JOCASTA.]

JOCASTA
My lords, ye look amazed to see your queen
With wreaths and gifts of incense in her hands.
I had a mind to visit the high shrines,
For Oedipus is overwrought, alarmed
With terrors manifold. He will not use
His past experience, like a man of sense,
To judge the present need, but lends an ear
To any croaker if he augurs ill.
Since then my counsels naught avail, I turn

To thee, our present help in time of trouble,
Apollo, Lord Lycean, and to thee
My prayers and supplications here I bring.
Lighten us, lord, and cleanse us from this curse!
For now we all are cowed like mariners
Who see their helmsman dumbstruck in the storm.
[Enter Corinthian MESSENGER.]

MESSENGER
My masters, tell me where the palace is
Of Oedipus; or better, where's the king.

CHORUS
Here is the palace and he bides within;
This is his queen the mother of his children.

MESSENGER
All happiness attend her and the house,
Blessed is her husband and her marriage-bed.

JOCASTA
My greetings to thee, stranger; thy fair words
Deserve a like response. But tell me why
Thou comest — what thy need or what thy news.

MESSENGER
Good for thy consort and the royal house.

JOCASTA
What may it be? Whose messenger art thou?

MESSENGER
The Isthmian commons have resolved to make
Thy husband king — so 'twas reported there.

JOCASTA
What! is not aged Polybus still king?

MESSENGER
No, verily; he's dead and in his grave.

JOCASTA

What! is he dead, the sire of Oedipus?

MESSENGER
If I speak falsely, may I die myself.

JOCASTA
Quick, maiden, bear these tidings to my lord.
Ye godsent oracles, where stand ye now!
This is the man whom Oedipus long shunned,
In dread to prove his murderer; and now
He dies in nature’s course, not by his hand.
[Enter OEDIPUS.]

OEDIPUS
My wife, my queen, Jocasta, why hast thou
Summoned me from my palace?

JOCASTA
Hear this man,
And as thou hearest judge what has become
Of all those awe-inspiring oracles.

OEDIPUS
Who is this man, and what his news for me?

JOCASTA
He comes from Corinth and his message this:
Thy father Polybus hath passed away.

OEDIPUS
What? let me have it, stranger, from thy mouth.

MESSENGER
If I must first make plain beyond a doubt
My message, know that Polybus is dead.

OEDIPUS
By treachery, or by sickness visited?

MESSENGER
One touch will send an old man to his rest.

OEDIPUS
So of some malady he died, poor man.

MESSENGER
Yes, having measured the full span of years.

OEDIPUS
Out on it, lady! why should one regard
The Pythian hearth or birds that scream i' the air?
Did they not point at me as doomed to slay
My father? but he's dead and in his grave
And here am I who ne'er unsheathed a sword;
Unless the longing for his absent son
Killed him and so *I* slew him in a sense.
But, as they stand, the oracles are dead —
Dust, ashes, nothing, dead as Polybus.

JOCASTA
Say, did not I foretell this long ago?

OEDIPUS
Thou didst: but I was misled by my fear.

JOCASTA
Then let I no more weigh upon thy soul.

OEDIPUS
Must I not fear my mother's marriage bed.

JOCASTA
Why should a mortal man, the sport of chance,
With no assured foreknowledge, be afraid?
Best live a careless life from hand to mouth.
This wedlock with thy mother fear not thou.
How oft it chances that in dreams a man
Has wed his mother! He who least regards
Such brainsick phantasies lives most at ease.

OEDIPUS
I should have shared in full thy confidence,
Were not my mother living; since she lives

Though half convinced I still must live in dread.

JOCASTA
And yet thy sire's death lights out darkness much.

OEDIPUS
Much, but my fear is touching her who lives.

MESSENGER
Who may this woman be whom thus you fear?

OEDIPUS
Merope, stranger, wife of Polybus.

MESSENGER
And what of her can cause you any fear?

OEDIPUS
A heaven-sent oracle of dread import.

MESSENGER
A mystery, or may a stranger hear it?

OEDIPUS
Aye, 'tis no secret. Loxias once foretold
That I should mate with mine own mother, and shed
With my own hands the blood of my own sire.
Hence Corinth was for many a year to me
A home distant; and I trove abroad,
But missed the sweetest sight, my parents' face.

MESSENGER
Was this the fear that exiled thee from home?

OEDIPUS
Yea, and the dread of slaying my own sire.

MESSENGER
Why, since I came to give thee pleasure, King,
Have I not rid thee of this second fear?

OEDIPUS

Well, thou shalt have due guerdon for thy pains.

MESSENGER
Well, I confess what chiefly made me come
Was hope to profit by thy coming home.

OEDIPUS
Nay, I will ne’er go near my parents more.

MESSENGER
My son, ’tis plain, thou know’st not what thou doest.

OEDIPUS
How so, old man? For heaven’s sake tell me all.

MESSENGER
If this is why thou dreadest to return.

OEDIPUS
Yea, lest the god’s word be fulfilled in me.

MESSENGER
Lest through thy parents thou shouldst be accursed?

OEDIPUS
This and none other is my constant dread.

MESSENGER
Dost thou not know thy fears are baseless all?

OEDIPUS
How baseless, if I am their very son?

MESSENGER
Since Polybus was naught to thee in blood.

OEDIPUS
What say’st thou? was not Polybus my sire?

MESSENGER
As much thy sire as I am, and no more.

OEDIPUS

My sire no more to me than one who is naught?

MESSENGER
Since I begat thee not, no more did he.

OEDIPUS
What reason had he then to call me son?

MESSENGER
Know that he took thee from my hands, a gift.

OEDIPUS
Yet, if no child of his, he loved me well.

MESSENGER
A childless man till then, he warmed to thee.

OEDIPUS
A foundling or a purchased slave, this child?

MESSENGER
I found thee in Cithaeron’s wooded glens.

OEDIPUS
What led thee to explore those upland glades?

MESSENGER
My business was to tend the mountain flocks.

OEDIPUS
A vagrant shepherd journeying for hire?

MESSENGER
True, but thy savior in that hour, my son.

OEDIPUS
My savior? from what harm? what ailed me then?

MESSENGER
Those ankle joints are evidence enow.

OEDIPUS
Ah, why remind me of that ancient sore?

MESSENGER
I loosed the pin that riveted thy feet.

OEDIPUS
Yes, from my cradle that dread brand I bore.

MESSENGER
Whence thou deriv'st the name that still is thine.

OEDIPUS
Who did it? I adjure thee, tell me who
Say, was it father, mother?

MESSENGER
I know not.
The man from whom I had thee may know more.

OEDIPUS
What, did another find me, not thyself?

MESSENGER
Not I; another shepherd gave thee me.

OEDIPUS
Who was he? Would'st thou know again the man?

MESSENGER
He passed indeed for one of Laius' house.

OEDIPUS
The king who ruled the country long ago?

MESSENGER
The same: he was a herdsman of the king.

OEDIPUS
And is he living still for me to see him?

MESSENGER
His fellow-countrymen should best know that.

OEDIPUS
Doth any bystander among you know

The herd he speaks of, or by seeing him
Afield or in the city? answer straight!
The hour hath come to clear this business up.

CHORUS
Methinks he means none other than the hind
Whom thou anon wert fain to see; but that
Our queen Jocasta best of all could tell.

OEDIPUS
Madam, dost know the man we sent to fetch?
Is the same of whom the stranger speaks?

JOCASTA
Who is the man? What matter? Let it be.
'Twere waste of thought to weigh such idle words.

OEDIPUS
No, with such guiding clues I cannot fail
To bring to light the secret of my birth.

JOCASTA
Oh, as thou carest for thy life, give o'er
This quest. Enough the anguish *I* endure.

OEDIPUS
Be of good cheer; though I be proved the son
Of a bondwoman, aye, through three descents
Triply a slave, thy honor is unsmirched.

JOCASTA
Yet humor me, I pray thee; do not this.

OEDIPUS
I cannot; I must probe this matter home.

JOCASTA
'Tis for thy sake I advise thee for the best.

OEDIPUS
I grow impatient of this best advice.

JOCASTA
Ah mayst thou ne’er discover who thou art!

OEDIPUS
Go, fetch me here the herd, and leave yon woman
To glory in her pride of ancestry.

JOCASTA
O woe is thee, poor wretch! With that last word
I leave thee, henceforth silent evermore.
[Exit JOCASTA]

CHORUS
Why, Oedipus, why stung with passionate grief
Hath the queen thus departed? Much I fear
From this dead calm will burst a storm of woes.

OEDIPUS
Let the storm burst, my fixed resolve still holds,
To learn my lineage, be it ne’er so low.
It may be she with all a woman’s pride
Thinks scorn of my base parentage. But I
Who rank myself as Fortune’s favorite child,
The giver of good gifts, shall not be shamed.
She is my mother and the changing moons
My brethren, and with them I wax and wane.
Thus sprung why should I fear to trace my birth?
Nothing can make me other than I am.

CHORUS
(Str.)
If my soul prophetic err not, if my wisdom aught avail,
   Thee, Cithaeron, I shall hail,
As the nurse and foster-mother of our Oedipus shall greet
Ere tomorrow’s full moon rises, and exalt thee as is meet.
Dance and song shall hymn thy praises, lover of our royal race.
   Phoebus, may my words find grace!

(Ant.)
Child, who bare thee, nymph or goddess? sure thy sure was more than

man,
Haply the hill-roamer Pan.
Of did Loxias beget thee, for he haunts the upland wold;
Or Cyllene's lord, or Bacchus, dweller on the hilltops cold?
Did some Heliconian Oread give him thee, a new-born joy?
Nymphs with whom he love to toy?

OEDIPUS
Elders, if I, who never yet before
Have met the man, may make a guess, methinks
I see the herdsman who we long have sought;
His time-worn aspect matches with the years
Of yonder aged messenger; besides
I seem to recognize the men who bring him
As servants of my own. But you, perchance,
Having in past days known or seen the herd,
May better by sure knowledge my surmise.

CHORUS
I recognize him; one of Laius' house;
A simple hind, but true as any man.
[Enter HERDSMAN.]

OEDIPUS
Corinthian, stranger, I address thee first,
Is this the man thou meanest!

MESSENGER
This is he.

OEDIPUS
And now old man, look up and answer all
I ask thee. Wast thou once of Laius' house?

HERDSMAN
I was, a thrall, not purchased but home-bred.

OEDIPUS
What was thy business? how wast thou employed?

HERDSMAN

The best part of my life I tended sheep.

OEDIPUS
What were the pastures thou didst most frequent?

HERDSMAN
Cithaeron and the neighboring alps.

OEDIPUS
Then there
Thou must have known yon man, at least by fame?

HERDSMAN
Yon man? in what way? what man dost thou mean?

OEDIPUS
The man here, having met him in past times...

HERDSMAN
Off-hand I cannot call him well to mind.

MESSENGER
No wonder, master. But I will revive
His blunted memories. Sure he can recall
What time together both we drove our flocks,
He two, I one, on the Cithaeron range,
For three long summers; I his mate from spring
Till rose Arcturus; then in winter time
I led mine home, he his to Laius' folds.
Did these things happen as I say, or no?

HERDSMAN
'Tis long ago, but all thou say'st is true.

MESSENGER
Well, thou mast then remember giving me
A child to rear as my own foster-son?

HERDSMAN
Why dost thou ask this question? What of that?

MESSENGER

Friend, he that stands before thee was that child.

HERDSMAN
A plague upon thee! Hold thy wanton tongue!

OEDIPUS
Softly, old man, rebuke him not; thy words
Are more deserving chastisement than his.

HERDSMAN
O best of masters, what is my offense?

OEDIPUS
Not answering what he asks about the child.

HERDSMAN
He speaks at random, babbles like a fool.

OEDIPUS
If thou lack’st grace to speak, I’ll loose thy tongue.

HERDSMAN
For mercy’s sake abuse not an old man.

OEDIPUS
Arrest the villain, seize and pinion him!

HERDSMAN
Alack, alack!
What have I done? what wouldst thou further learn?

OEDIPUS
Didst give this man the child of whom he asks?

HERDSMAN
I did; and would that I had died that day!

OEDIPUS
And die thou shalt unless thou tell the truth.

HERDSMAN
But, if I tell it, I am doubly lost.

OEDIPUS
The knave methinks will still prevaricate.

HERDSMAN
Nay, I confessed I gave it long ago.

OEDIPUS
Whence came it? was it thine, or given to thee?

HERDSMAN
I had it from another, ’twas not mine.

OEDIPUS
From whom of these our townsmen, and what house?

HERDSMAN
Forbear for God’s sake, master, ask no more.

OEDIPUS
If I must question thee again, thou’rt lost.

HERDSMAN
Well then — it was a child of Laius’ house.

OEDIPUS
Slave-born or one of Laius’ own race?

HERDSMAN
Ah me!
I stand upon the perilous edge of speech.

OEDIPUS
And I of hearing, but I still must hear.

HERDSMAN
Know then the child was by repute his own,
But she within, thy consort best could tell.

OEDIPUS
What! she, she gave it thee?

HERDSMAN
’Tis so, my king.

OEDIPUS
With what intent?

HERDSMAN
To make away with it.

OEDIPUS
What, she its mother.

HERDSMAN
Fearing a dread weird.

OEDIPUS
What weird?

HERDSMAN
’Twas told that he should slay his sire.

OEDIPUS
What didst thou give it then to this old man?

HERDSMAN
Through pity, master, for the babe. I thought
He’d take it to the country whence he came;
But he preserved it for the worst of woes.
For if thou art in sooth what this man saith,
God pity thee! thou wast to misery born.

OEDIPUS
Ah me! ah me! all brought to pass, all true!
O light, may I behold thee nevermore!
I stand a wretch, in birth, in wedlock cursed,
A parricide, incestuously, triply cursed!
[Exit OEDIPUS]

CHORUS
(Str. 1)
Races of mortal man
Whose life is but a span,
I count ye but the shadow of a shade!
For he who most doth know

Of bliss, hath but the show;
A moment, and the visions pale and fade.
Thy fall, O Oedipus, thy piteous fall
Warns me none born of women blest to call.

(Ant. 1)
For he of marksmen best,
O Zeus, outshot the rest,
And won the prize supreme of wealth and power.
By him the vulture maid
Was quelled, her witchery laid;
He rose our savior and the land's strong tower.
We hailed thee king and from that day adored
Of mighty Thebes the universal lord.

(Str. 2)
O heavy hand of fate!
Who now more desolate,
Whose tale more sad than thine, whose lot more dire?
O Oedipus, discrowned head,
Thy cradle was thy marriage bed;
One harborage sufficed for son and sire.
How could the soil thy father eared so long
Endure to bear in silence such a wrong?

(Ant. 2)
All-seeing Time hath caught
Guilt, and to justice brought
The son and sire commingled in one bed.
O child of Laius' ill-starred race
Would I had ne'er beheld thy face;
I raise for thee a dirge as o'er the dead.
Yet, sooth to say, through thee I drew new breath,
And now through thee I feel a second death.
[Enter SECOND MESSENGER.]

SECOND MESSENGER
Most grave and reverend senators of Thebes,
What Deeds ye soon must hear, what sights behold
How will ye mourn, if, true-born patriots,

Ye reverence still the race of Labdacus!
Not Ister nor all Phasis' flood, I ween,
Could wash away the blood-stains from this house,
The ills it shrouds or soon will bring to light,
Ills wrought of malice, not unwittingly.
The worst to bear are self-inflicted wounds.

CHORUS
Grievous enough for all our tears and groans
Our past calamities; what canst thou add?

SECOND MESSENGER
My tale is quickly told and quickly heard.
Our sovereign lady queen Jocasta's dead.

CHORUS
Alas, poor queen! how came she by her death?

SECOND MESSENGER
By her own hand. And all the horror of it,
Not having seen, yet cannot comprehend.
Nathless, as far as my poor memory serves,
I will relate the unhappy lady's woe.
When in her frenzy she had passed inside
The vestibule, she hurried straight to win
The bridal-chamber, clutching at her hair
With both her hands, and, once within the room,
She shut the doors behind her with a crash.
"Laius," she cried, and called her husband dead
Long, long ago; her thought was of that child
By him begot, the son by whom the sire
Was murdered and the mother left to breed
With her own seed, a monstrous progeny.
Then she bewailed the marriage bed whereon
Poor wretch, she had conceived a double brood,
Husband by husband, children by her child.
What happened after that I cannot tell,
Nor how the end befell, for with a shriek
Burst on us Oedipus; all eyes were fixed
On Oedipus, as up and down he strode,

Nor could we mark her agony to the end.
For stalking to and fro “A sword!” he cried,
“Where is the wife, no wife, the teeming womb
That bore a double harvest, me and mine?”
And in his frenzy some supernal power
(No mortal, surely, none of us who watched him)
Guided his footsteps; with a terrible shriek,
As though one beckoned him, he crashed against
The folding doors, and from their staples forced
The wrenched bolts and hurled himself within.
Then we beheld the woman hanging there,
A running noose entwined about her neck.
But when he saw her, with a maddened roar
He loosed the cord; and when her wretched corpse
Lay stretched on earth, what followed — O ’twas dread!
He tore the golden brooches that upheld
Her queenly robes, upraised them high and smote
Full on his eye-balls, uttering words like these:
“No more shall ye behold such sights of woe,
Deeds I have suffered and myself have wrought;
Henceforward quenched in darkness shall ye see
Those ye should ne’er have seen; now blind to those
Whom, when I saw, I vainly yearned to know.”
Such was the burden of his moan, whereto,
Not once but oft, he struck with his hand uplift
His eyes, and at each stroke the ensanguined orbs
Bedewed his beard, not oozing drop by drop,
But one black gory downpour, thick as hail.
Such evils, issuing from the double source,
Have whelmed them both, confounding man and wife.
Till now the storied fortune of this house
Was fortunate indeed; but from this day
Woe, lamentation, ruin, death, disgrace,
All ills that can be named, all, all are theirs.

CHORUS
But hath he still no respite from his pain?

SECOND MESSENGER

He cries, “Unbar the doors and let all Thebes
Behold the slayer of his sire, his mother’s— “
That shameful word my lips may not repeat.
He vows to fly self-banished from the land,
Nor stay to bring upon his house the curse
Himself had uttered; but he has no strength
Nor one to guide him, and his torture’s more
Than man can suffer, as yourselves will see.
For lo, the palace portals are unbarred,
And soon ye shall behold a sight so sad
That he who must abhorred would pity it.
[Enter OEDIPUS blinded.]

CHORUS

Woeful sight! more woeful none
These sad eyes have looked upon.
Whence this madness? None can tell
Who did cast on thee his spell,
prowling all thy life around,
Leaping with a demon bound.
Hapless wretch! how can I brook
On thy misery to look?
Though to gaze on thee I yearn,
Much to question, much to learn,
Horror-struck away I turn.

OEDIPUS
Ah me! ah woe is me!
Ah whither am I borne!
How like a ghost forlorn
My voice flits from me on the air!
On, on the demon goads. The end, ah where?

CHORUS
An end too dread to tell, too dark to see.

OEDIPUS
(Str. 1)
Dark, dark! The horror of darkness, like a shroud,
Wraps me and bears me on through mist and cloud.

Ah me, ah me! What spasms athwart me shoot,
What pangs of agonizing memory?

CHORUS
No marvel if in such a plight thou feel'st
The double weight of past and present woes.

OEDIPUS
(Ant. 1)
Ah friend, still loyal, constant still and kind,
   Thou carest for the blind.
I know thee near, and though bereft of eyes,
   Thy voice I recognize.

CHORUS
O doer of dread deeds, how couldst thou mar
Thy vision thus? What demon goaded thee?

OEDIPUS
(Str. 2)
Apollo, friend, Apollo, he it was
   That brought these ills to pass;
But the right hand that dealt the blow
   Was mine, none other. How,
How, could I longer see when sight
   Brought no delight?

CHORUS
Alas! 'tis as thou sayest.

OEDIPUS
Say, friends, can any look or voice
Or touch of love henceforth my heart rejoice?
   Haste, friends, no fond delay,
   Take the twice cursed away
   Far from all ken,
The man abhorred of gods, accursed of men.

CHORUS
O thy despair well suits thy desperate case.
Would I had never looked upon thy face!

OEDIPUS
(Ant. 2)
My curse on him whoe'er unrived
The waif's fell fetters and my life revived!
He meant me well, yet had he left me there,
He had saved my friends and me a world of care.

CHORUS
I too had wished it so.

OEDIPUS
Then had I never come to shed
My father's blood nor climbed my mother's bed;
The monstrous offspring of a womb defiled,
Co-mate of him who gendered me, and child.
Was ever man before afflicted thus,
Like Oedipus.

CHORUS
I cannot say that thou hast counseled well,
For thou wert better dead than living blind.

OEDIPUS
What's done was well done. Thou canst never shake
My firm belief. A truce to argument.
For, had I sight, I know not with what eyes
I could have met my father in the shades,
Or my poor mother, since against the twain
I sinned, a sin no gallows could atone.
Aye, but, ye say, the sight of children joys
A parent's eyes. What, born as mine were born?
No, such a sight could never bring me joy;
Nor this fair city with its battlements,
Its temples and the statues of its gods,
Sights from which I, now wretchedst of all,
Once ranked the foremost Theban in all Thebes,
By my own sentence am cut off, condemned
By my own proclamation 'gainst the wretch,
The miscreant by heaven itself declared
Unclean — and of the race of Laius.

Thus branded as a felon by myself,
How had I dared to look you in the face?
Nay, had I known a way to choke the springs
Of hearing, I had never shrunk to make
A dungeon of this miserable frame,
Cut off from sight and hearing; for ’tis bliss
to bide in regions sorrow cannot reach.
Why didst thou harbor me, Cithaeron, why
Didst thou not take and slay me? Then I never
Had shown to men the secret of my birth.
O Polybus, O Corinth, O my home,
Home of my ancestors (so wast thou called)
How fair a nursling then I seemed, how foul
The canker that lay festering in the bud!
Now is the blight revealed of root and fruit.
Ye triple high-roads, and thou hidden glen,
Coppice, and pass where meet the three-branched ways,
Ye drank my blood, the life-blood these hands spilt,
My father’s; do ye call to mind perchance
Those deeds of mine ye witnessed and the work
I wrought thereafter when I came to Thebes?
O fatal wedlock, thou didst give me birth,
And, having borne me, sowed again my seed,
Mingling the blood of fathers, brothers, children,
Brides, wives and mothers, an incestuous brood,
All horrors that are wrought beneath the sun,
Horrors so foul to name them were unmeet.
O, I adjure you, hide me anywhere
Far from this land, or slay me straight, or cast me
Down to the depths of ocean out of sight.
Come hither, deign to touch an abject wretch;
Draw near and fear not; I myself must bear
The load of guilt that none but I can share.
[Enter CREON.]

CREON
Lo, here is Creon, the one man to grant
Thy prayer by action or advice, for he
Is left the State’s sole guardian in thy stead.

OEDIPUS
Ah me! what words to accost him can I find?
What cause has he to trust me? In the past
I have bee proved his rancorous enemy.

CREON
Not in derision, Oedipus, I come
Nor to upbraid thee with thy past misdeeds.
(To BYSTANDERS)
But shame upon you! if ye feel no sense
Of human decencies, at least revere
The Sun whose light beholds and nurtures all.
Leave not thus nakedly for all to gaze at
A horror neither earth nor rain from heaven
Nor light will suffer. Lead him straight within,
For it is seemly that a kinsman's woes
Be heard by kin and seen by kin alone.

OEDIPUS
O listen, since thy presence comes to me
A shock of glad surprise — so noble thou,
And I so vile — O grant me one small boon.
I ask it not on my behalf, but thine.

CREON
And what the favor thou wouldst crave of me?

OEDIPUS
Forth from thy borders thrust me with all speed;
Set me within some vasty desert where
No mortal voice shall greet me any more.

CREON
This had I done already, but I deemed
It first behooved me to consult the god.

OEDIPUS
His will was set forth fully — to destroy
The parricide, the scoundrel; and I am he.

CREON

Yea, so he spake, but in our present plight
‘Twere better to consult the god anew.

OEDIPUS
Dare ye inquire concerning such a wretch?

CREON
Yea, for thyself wouldst credit now his word.

OEDIPUS
Aye, and on thee in all humility
I lay this charge: let her who lies within
Receive such burial as thou shalt ordain;
Such rites ’tis thine, as brother, to perform.
But for myself, O never let my Thebes,
The city of my sires, be doomed to bear
The burden of my presence while I live.
No, let me be a dweller on the hills,
On yonder mount Cithaeron, famed as mine,
My tomb predestined for me by my sire
And mother, while they lived, that I may die
Slain as they sought to slay me, when alive.
This much I know full surely, nor disease
Shall end my days, nor any common chance;
For I had ne’er been snatched from death, unless
I was predestined to some awful doom.
    So be it. I reck not how Fate deals with me
But my unhappy children — for my sons
Be not concerned, O Creon, they are men,
And for themselves, where’er they be, can fend.
But for my daughters twain, poor innocent maids,
Who ever sat beside me at the board
Sharing my viands, drinking of my cup,
For them, I pray thee, care, and, if thou willst,
O might I feel their touch and make my moan.
Hear me, O prince, my noble-hearted prince!
Could I but blindly touch them with my hands
I’d think they still were mine, as when I saw.
[ANTIGONE and ISMENE are led in.]
What say I? can it be my pretty ones

Whose sobs I hear? Has Creon pitied me
And sent me my two darlings? Can this be?

CREON
’Tis true; ’twas I procured thee this delight,
Knowing the joy they were to thee of old.

OEDIPUS
God speed thee! and as meed for bringing them
May Providence deal with thee kindlier
Than it has dealt with me! O children mine,
Where are ye? Let me clasp you with these hands,
A brother’s hands, a father’s; hands that made
Lack-luster sockets of his once bright eyes;
Hands of a man who blindly, recklessly,
Became your sire by her from whom he sprang.
Though I cannot behold you, I must weep
In thinking of the evil days to come,
The slights and wrongs that men will put upon you.
Where’er ye go to feast or festival,
No merrymaking will it prove for you,
But oft abashed in tears ye will return.
And when ye come to marriageable years,
Where’s the bold wooers who will jeopardize
To take unto himself such disrepute
As to my children’s children still must cling,
For what of infamy is lacking here?
“Their father slew his father, sowed the seed
Where he himself was gendered, and begat
These maidens at the source wherefrom he sprang.”
Such are the gibes that men will cast at you.
Who then will wed you? None, I ween, but ye
Must pine, poor maids, in single barrenness.
O Prince, Menoeceus’ son, to thee, I turn,
With the it rests to father them, for we
Their natural parents, both of us, are lost.
O leave them not to wander poor, unwed,
Thy kin, nor let them share my low estate.
O pity them so young, and but for thee

All destitute. Thy hand upon it, Prince.
To you, my children I had much to say,
Were ye but ripe to hear. Let this suffice:
Pray ye may find some home and live content,
And may your lot prove happier than your sire's.

CREON
Thou hast had enough of weeping; pass within.

OEDIPUS
I must obey,
Though 'tis grievous.

CREON
Weep not, everything must have its day.

OEDIPUS
Well I go, but on conditions.

CREON
What thy terms for going, say.

OEDIPUS
Send me from the land an exile.

CREON
Ask this of the gods, not me.

OEDIPUS
But I am the gods' abhorrence.

CREON
Then they soon will grant thy plea.

OEDIPUS
Lead me hence, then, I am willing.

CREON
Come, but let thy children go.

OEDIPUS
Rob me not of these my children!

CREON

Crave not mastery in all,
For the mastery that raised thee was thy bane and wrought thy fall.

CHORUS

Look ye, countrymen and Thebans, this is Oedipus the great,
He who knew the Sphinx’s riddle and was mightiest in our state.
Who of all our townsmen gazed not on his fame with envious eyes?
Now, in what a sea of troubles sunk and overwhelmed he lies!
Therefore wait to see life’s ending ere thou count one mortal blest;
Wait till free from pain and sorrow he has gained his final rest.

PHILOCTETES

Translated by Lewis Campbell

First performed at the Festival of Dionysus in 409 BC, where it won first prize, this tragedy takes place during the Trojan War, describing the attempt by Neoptolemus and Odysseus to bring the wounded Philoctetes with them to Troy.

According to the myth, when Heracles was near his death, he wished to be burned on a funeral pyre while still alive. No one but Philoctetes would light the fire and in return for this favour Heracles gave him his bow. When Philoctetes left with the others to participate in the Trojan War, he was bitten on the foot by a snake when walking on Chryse, a sacred ground. The bite left him in constant agony, emitting a horrible smell. For this reason he was left by Odysseus on the desert island Lemnos. Ten years passed and the Greeks captured the Trojan seer Helenus, son of Priam. He foretold that they would need Philoctetes and the bow of Heracles in order to win the war. Odysseus sailed back to Lemnos with Neoptolemus, the son of Achilles, in order to convince Philoctetes to join them. The task would not be easy, as Philoctetes bitterly hates Odysseus and the Greeks for leaving him behind.

Sophocles' *Philoctetes* begins with their arrival on the island. Odysseus explains to Neoptolemus that he must perform a shameful action in order to garner future glory - to take Philoctetes by tricking him with a false story while Odysseus hides. Neoptolemus is portrayed as an honourable boy and so it takes some persuading in order for him to play this part. In order to gain Philoctetes' trust, Neoptolemus dupes Philoctetes into thinking he hates Odysseus as well. Neoptolemus does this by telling Philoctetes that Odysseus has his father Achilles' armour. He tells Philoctetes that this armour was his right by birth and Odysseus would not give it up to him. After gaining Philoctetes' trust and offering him a voyage home, Neoptolemus is allowed to look at the bow of Heracles.

Neoptolemus holds the bow while Philoctetes is going into an unbearable fit of pain in his foot. Feeling ashamed, Neoptolemus debates giving it back to him. Odysseus appears and a series of arguments ensue. Eventually Neoptolemus' conscience gains the upper hand, and he returns the bow. After many threats made on both sides, Odysseus flees. Neoptolemus then tries to talk Philoctetes into coming to Troy by his own free will, but Philoctetes will not agree. In the end Neoptolemus consents to take Philoctetes back to Greece, even though that means that he will be exposed to the anger of the army. This appears to be the conclusion of the play; however, as they are leaving, the god Heracles appears above them and tells Philoctetes that if he goes to Troy then he will be cured and

the Greeks will win. Philoctetes willingly obeys him.

‘Philoctetes on Lemnos’ by Jean Germain Drouais, 1788

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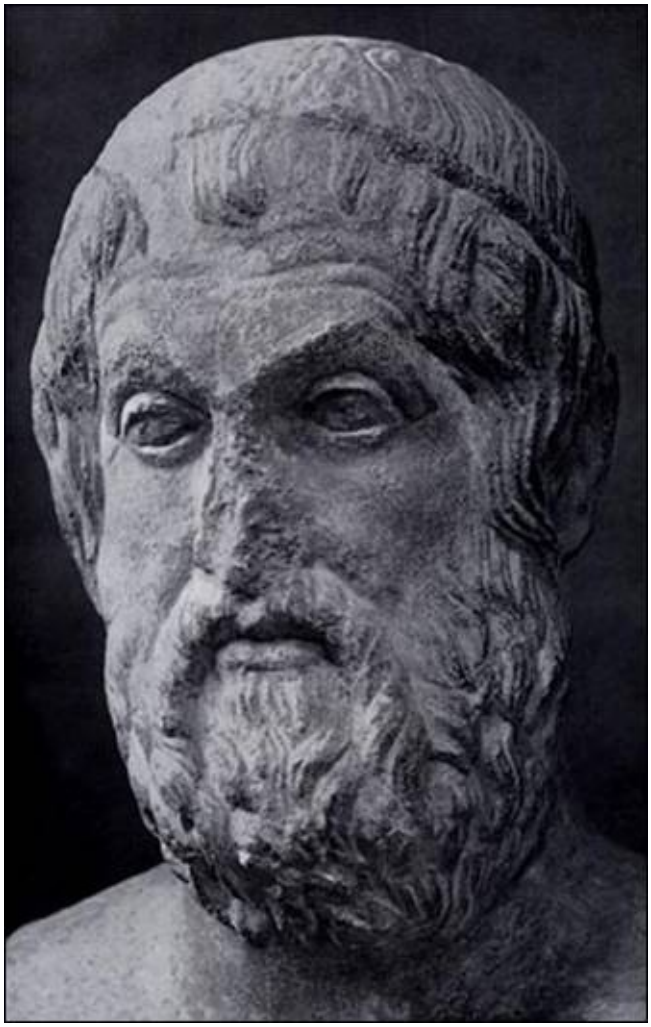

A bust of Sophocles from the Roman period

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

ODYSSEUS.
NEOPTOLEMUS.
CHORUS of Mariners.
PHILOCTETES.
Messenger, disguised as a Merchantman.
HERACLES, appearing from the sky.

SCENE. A desert shore of the Island of Lemnos.

ARGUMENT

It was fated that Troy should be taken by Neoptolemus, the son of Achilles, assisted by the bow of Heracles in the hands of Philoctetes.

Now Philoctetes had been rejected by the army because of a trouble in his foot, which made his presence with them insufferable; and had been cast away by Odysseus on the island of Lemnos.

But when the decree of fate was revealed by prophecy, Odysseus undertook to bring Philoctetes back, and took with him Neoptolemus, whose ambition could only be gratified through the return of Philoctetes with the bow.

Philoctetes was resolutely set against returning, and at the opening of the drama Neoptolemus is persuaded by Odysseus to take him with guile.

But when Philoctetes appears, the youth’s ingenuous nature is so wrought upon through pity and remorse, that his sympathy and native truthfulness at length overcome his ambition.

When the inward sacrifice is complete, Heracles appears from heaven, and by a few words changes the mind of Philoctetes, so that all ends well.

PHILOCTETES

ODYSSEUS. NEOPTOLEMUS.

ODYSSEUS. This coast of sea-girt Lemnos, where we stand,
Is uninhabited, untrodden of men.
And here, O noble son of noblest sire,
Achilles-born Neoptolemus, I erewhile, —
Ordered by those who had command, — cast forth
Trachinian Philoctetes, Poeas' son,
His foot dark-dripping with a rankling wound;
When with wild cries, that frighted holy rest,
Filling the camp, he troubled every rite,
That none might handle sacrifice, or pour
Wine-offering, but his noise disturbed our peace.
But why these words? No moment this for talk,
Lest he discern my coming, and I lose
The scheme, wherewith I think to catch him soon.
Now most behoves thy service, to explore
This headland for a cave with double mouth,
Whose twofold aperture, on wintry days,
Gives choice of sunshine, and in summer noons
The breeze wafts slumber through the airy cell.
Then, something lower down, upon the left,
Unless 'tis dried, thine eye may note a spring.
Go near now silently, and make me know
If still he persevere, and hold this spot,
Or have roamed elsewhere, that informed of this
I may proceed with what remains to say,
And we may act in concert.

NEOPTOLEMUS. Lord Odysseus,
Thy foremost errand will not task me far.
Methinks I see the cave whereof thou speakest.

OD. Where? let me see it. Above there, or below?

NEO. Yonder, above. And yet I hear no tread.
[NEOPTOLEMUS climbs up to the cave

OD. Look if he be not lodged in slumber there.

NEO. I find no inmate, but an empty room.

OD. What? no provision for a dwelling-place?

NEO. A bed of leaves for some one harbouring here.

OD. Nought else beneath the roof? Is all forlorn?

NEO. A cup of wood, some untaught craftsman's skill,
And, close at hand, these embers of a fire.

OD. That store is his. I read the token clear.

NEO. Oh! and these festering rags give evidence,
Steeped as with dressing some malignant sore.

OD. The man inhabits here: I know it now.
And sure he's not far off. How can he range,
Whose limb drags heavy with an ancient harm?
But he's gone, either to bring forage home,
Or where he hath found some plant of healing power.
Send therefore thine attendant to look forth,
Lest unawares he find me. All our host
Were not so fair a prize for him as I.

NEO. My man is going, and shall watch the path.
What more dost thou require of me? Speak on.

OD. Son of Achilles, know that thou art come
To serve us nobly, not with strength alone,
But, faithful to thy mission, if so be,
To do things strange, unwonted to thine ear.

NEO. What dost thou bid me?

OD. 'Tis thy duty now
To entrap the mind of Poeas' son with words.
When he shall ask thee, who and whence thou art,

Declare thy name and father. ’Tis not that
I charge thee to conceal. But for thy voyage,
’Tis homeward, leaving the Achaean host,
With perfect hatred hating them, because
They who had drawn thee with strong prayers from home,
Their hope for taking Troy, allowed thee not
Thy just demand to have thy father’s arms,
But, e’er thy coming, wrongly gave them o’er
[64-101] Unto Odysseus: and thereon launch forth
With boundless execration against me.
That will not pain me, but if thou reject
This counsel, thou wilt trouble all our host,
Since, if his bow shall not be ta’en, thy life
Will ne’er be crowned through Troy’s discomfiture.
Now let me show, why thine approach to him
Is safe and trustful as mine cannot be
Thou didst sail forth, not to redeem thine oath,
Nor by constraint, nor with the foremost band.
All which reproaches I must bear: and he,
But seeing me, while master of his bow,
Will slay me, and my ruin will be thine.
This point then craves our cunning, to acquire
By subtle means the irresistible bow —
Thy nature was not framed, I know it well,
For speaking falsehood, or contriving harm.
Yet, since the prize of victory is so dear,
Endure it — We’ll be just another day
But now, for one brief hour, devote thyself
To serve me without shame, and then for aye
Hereafter be the pearl of righteousness.

NEO. The thing that, being named, revolts mine ear,
Son of Laërtes, I abhor to do
’Tis not my nature, no, nor, as they tell,
My father’s, to work aught by craft and guile.
I’ll undertake to bring him in by force,
Not by deceit. For, sure, with his one foot,
He cannot be a match for all our crew
Being sent, my lord, to serve thee, I am loth
To seem rebellious. But I rather choose

To seem rebellious. But I rather choose
To offend with honour, than to win by wrong.

OD. Son of a valiant sire, I, too, in youth,
Had once a slow tongue and an active hand.
But since I have proved the world, I clearly see
Words and not deeds give mastery over men.

NEO. What then is thy command? To lie? No more?

OD. To entangle Philoctetes with deceit.

[102-134] NEO. Why through deceit? May not persuasion fetch him?

OD. Never. And force as certainly will fail.

NEO. What lends him such assurance of defence?

OD. Arrows, the unerring harbingers of Death.

NEO. Then to go near him is a perilous thing.

OD. Unless with subtlety, as I have said.

NEO. And is not lying shameful to thy soul?

OD. Not if by lying I can save my soul.

NEO. How must one look in speaking such a word?

OD. Where gain invites, this shrinking is not good.

NEO. What gain I through his coming back to Troy?

OD. His arms alone have power to take Troy-town.

NEO. Then am not I the spoiler, as ye said?

OD. Thou without them, they without thee, are powerless.

NEO. If it be so, they must be sought and won.

OD. Yea, for in this two prizes will be thine.

NEO. What? When I learn them, I will not refuse.

OD. Wisdom and valour joined in one good name.

NEO. Shame, to the winds! Come, I will do this thing.

OD. Say, dost thou bear my bidding full in mind?

NEO. Doubt not, since once for all I have embraced it.

OD. Thou, then, await him here. I will retire,
For fear my hated presence should be known,
And take back our attendant to the ship.
And then once more, should ye appear to waste
The time unduly, I will send again
This same man hither in disguise, transformed
To the strange semblance of a merchantman;
From dark suggestion of whose crafty tongue,
Thou, O my son, shalt gather timely counsel.
Now to my ship. This charge I leave to thee.
May secret Hermes guide us to our end,
And civic Pallas, named of victory,
The sure protectress of my devious way.

[135-162]

CHORUS (entering).

Strange in the stranger land,I 1
What shall I speak? What hide
From a heart suspicious of ill?
Tell me, O master mine!
Wise above all is the man,
Peerless in searching thought,
Who with the Zeus-given wand
Wieldeth a Heavensent power.
This unto thee, dear son,
Fraught with ancestral might,
This to thy life hath come.
Wherefore I bid thee declare,
What must I do for thy need?

NEO. Even now methinks thou longest to espy
Near ocean’s marge the place where he doth lie

Near ocean's marge the place where he doth lie.
Gaze without fear. But when the traveller stern,
Who from this roof is parted, shall return,
Advancing still as I the signal give,
To serve each moment's mission thou shalt strive.

CH. That, O my son, from of oldI 2
Hath been my care, to take note
What by thy beck'ning is told;
Still thy success to promote.
But for our errand to-day
Behoves thee, master, to say
Where is the hearth of his home;
Or where even now doth he roam?
O tell me, lest all unaware
He spring like a wolf from his lair
And I by surprise should be ta'en,
Where doth he move or remain,
Here lodging, or wandering away?

NEO. Thou seëst yon double doorway of his cell,
Poor habitation of the rock.

CH. 2. But tell
Where is the pain-worn wight himself abroad?

NEO. To me 'tis clear, that, in his quest for food,
[163-204] Here, not far off, he trails yon furrowed path.
For, so 'tis told, this mode the sufferer hath
Of sustenance, oh hardness! bringing low
Wild creatures with wing'd arrows from his bow;
Nor findeth healer for his troublous woe.

CH. I feel his misery.II 1
With no companion eye,
Far from all human care,
He pines with fell disease;
Each want he hourly sees
Awakening new despair.
How can he bear it still?
O cruel Heavens! O pain

Of that afflicted mortal train
Whose life sharp sorrows fill!

Born in a princely hall,II 2
Highest, perchance, of all,
Now lies he comfortless
Alone in deep distress,
‘Mongst rough and dappled brutes,
With pangs and hunger worn;
While from far distance shoots,
On airy pinion borne,
The unbridled Echo, still replying
To his most bitter crying.

NEO. At nought of this I marvel — for if I
Judge rightly, there assailed him from on high
That former plague through Chrysa’s cruel sting:
And if to-day he suffer anything
With none to soothe, it must be from the will
Of some great God, so caring to fulfil
The word of prophecy, lest he should bend
On Troy the shaft no mortal may forfend,
Before the arrival of Troy’s destined hour,
When she must fall, o’ermastered by their power.

CH. 1. Hush, my son!III 1

NEO. Why so?

CH. 1. A sound
Gendered of some mortal woe,
[205-237] Started from the neighbouring ground.
Here, or there? Ah! now I know.
Hark! ’tis the voice of one in pain,
Travelling hardly, the deep strain
Of human anguish, all too clear,
That smites my heart, that wounds mine ear.

CH. 2. From far it peals. But thou, my son!III 2

NEO. What?

CH. 2. Think again. He moveth nigh:
He holds the region: not with tone
Of piping shepherd’s rural minstrelsy,
But belloweth his far cry,
Stumbling perchance with mortal pain,
Or else in wild amaze,
As he our ship surveys
Unwonted on the inhospitable main.

Enter PHILOCTETES.

PHILOCTETES. Ho!
What men are ye that to this desert shore,
Harbourless, uninhabited, are come
On shipboard? Of what country or what race
Shall I pronounce ye? For your outward garb
Is Grecian, ever dearest to this heart
That hungers now to hear your voices’ tune.
Ah! do not fear me, do not shrink away
From my wild looks: but, pitying one so poor,
Forlorn and desolate in nameless woe,
Speak, if with friendly purpose ye are come.
Oh answer! ’Tis not meet that I should lose
This kindness from your lips, or ye from mine.

NEO. Then know this first, O stranger, as thou wouldest,
That we are Greeks.

PHI. O dear, dear name! Ah me!
In all these years, once, only once, I hear it!
My son, what fairest gale hath wafted thee?
What need hath brought thee to the shore? What mission?
[238-273] Declare all this, that I may know thee well.

NEO. The sea-girt Scyros is my native home.
Thitherward I make voyage: — Achilles’ son,
Named Neoptolemus. — I have told thee all.

PHI. Dear is that shore to me, dear is thy father
O ancient Lycomedes’ foster-child,
Whence cam’st thou hither? How didst thou set forth?

NEO. From Troy we made our course in sailing hither.

PHI. How? Sure thou wast not with us, when at first
We launched our vessels on the Troyward way?

NEO. Hadst thou a share in that adventurous toil?

PHI. And know'st thou not whom thou behold'st in me,
Young boy?

NEO. How should I know him whom I ne'er
Set eye on?

PHI. Hast not even heard my name,
Nor echoing rumour of my ruinous woe?

NEO. Nay, I know nought of all thy questioning.

PHI. How full of griefs am I, how Heaven-abhorred,
When of my piteous state no faintest sound
Hath reached my home, or any Grecian land!
But they, who pitilessly cast me forth,
Keep silence and are glad, while this my plague
Blooms ever, and is strengthened more and more.
Boy, great Achilles' offspring, in this form
Thou seest the man, of whom, methinks, erewhile
Thou hast been told, to whom the Hercúlean bow
Descended, Philoctetes, Poeas' son;
Whom the two generals and the Ithacan king
Cast out thus shamefully forlorn, afflicted
With the fierce malady and desperate wound
Made by the cruel basilisk's murderous tooth.
With this for company they left me, child!
Exposed upon this shore, deserted, lone.
From seaward Chrysa came they with their fleet
And touched at Lemnos. I had fallen to rest
From the long tossing, in a shadowy cave
On yonder cliff by the shore. Gladly they saw,
And left me, having set forth for my need,
[273-314] Poor man, some scanty rags, and a thin store

Of provender. Such food be theirs, I pray!
Imagine, O my son, when they were gone,
What wakening, what arising, then was mine;
What weeping, what lamenting of my woe!
When I beheld the ships, wherewith I sailed,
Gone, one and all! and no man in the place,
None to bestead me, none to comfort me
In my sore sickness. And where'er I looked,
Nought but distress was present with me still.
No lack of that, for one thing! — Ah! my son,
Time passed, and there I found myself alone
Within my narrow lodging, forced to serve
Each pressing need. For body's sustenance
This bow supplied me with sufficient store,
Wounding the feathered doves, and when the shaft,
From the tight string, had struck, myself, ay me!
Dragging this foot, would crawl to my swift prey.
Then water must be fetched, and in sharp frost
Wood must be found and broken, — all by me.
Nor would fire come unbidden, but with flint
From flints striking dim sparks, I hammered forth
The struggling flame that keeps the life in me.
For houseroom with the single help of fire
Gives all I need, save healing for my sore.
Now learn, my son, the nature of this isle.
No mariner puts in here willingly.
For it hath neither moorage, nor sea-port,
For traffic or kind shelter or good cheer.
Not hitherward do prudent men make voyage.
Perchance one may have touched against his will.
Many strange things may happen in long time.
These, when they come, in words have pitied me,
And given me food, or raiment, in compassion.
But none is willing, when I speak thereof,
To take me safely home. Wherefore I pine
Now this tenth year, in famine and distress,
Feeding the hunger of my ravenous plague.
Such deeds, my son, the Atridae, and the might
Of sage Odysseus, have performed on me.

[315-349] Wherefore may all the Olympian gods, one day,
Plague them with stern requital for my wrong!

CH. Methinks my feeling for thee, Poeas' child,
Is like that of thy former visitants.

NEO. I, too, a witness to confirm his words,
Know them for verities, since I have found
The Atridae and Odysseus evil men.

PHI. Art thou, too, wroth with the all-pestilent sons
Of Atreus? Have they given thee cause to grieve?

NEO. Would that my hand might ease the wrath I feel!
Then Sparta and Mycenae should be ware
That Scyros too breeds valiant sons for war.

PHI. Brave youth! I love thee. Tell me the great cause
Why thou inveighest against them with such heat?

NEO. O son of Poeas, hardly shall I tell
What outrage I endured when I had come;
Yet I will speak it. When the fate of death
O'ertook Achilles —

PHI. Out, alas! no more!
Hold, till thou first hast made me clearly know,
Is Peleus' offspring dead?

NEO. Alas! he is,
Slain by no mortal, felled by Phoebus' shaft:
So men reported —

PHI. Well, right princely was he!
And princely is he who slew him. Shall I mourn
Him first, or wait till I have heard thy tale?

NEO. Methinks thou hast thyself enough to mourn,
Without the burden of another's woe.

PHI. Well spoken. Then renew thine own complaint,
And tell once more wherein they insulted thee.

NEO. There came to fetch me, in a gallant ship,
Odysseus and the fosterer of my sire,
Saying, whether soothly, or in idle show,
That, since my father perished, it was known
None else but I should take Troy's citadel.
Such words from them, my friend, thou may'st believe,
Held me not long from making voyage with speed,
[350-385] Chiefly through longing for my father's corse,
To see him yet unburied, — for I ne'er
Had seen him. Then, besides, 'twas a fair cause,
If, by my going, I should vanquish Troy.
One day I had sailed, and on the second came
To sad Sigeum with wind-favoured speed,
When straightway all the host, surrounding me
As I set foot on shore, saluted me,
And swore the dead Achilles was in life,
Their eyes being witness, when they looked on me.
He lay there in his shroud: but I, unhappy,
Soon ending lamentation for the dead,
Went near to those Atridae, as to friends,
To obtain my father's armour and all else
That had been his. And then, — alas the while,
That men should be so hard! — they spake this word:
'Seed of Achilles, thou may'st freely take
All else thy father owned, but for those arms,
Another wields them now, Laërtes' son.'
Tears rushed into mine eyes, and in hot wrath
I straightway rose, and bitterly outspake:
'O miscreant! What? And have ye dared to give
Mine arms to some man else, unknown to me?'
Then said Odysseus, for he chanced to be near,
'Yea, child, and justly have they given me these.
I saved them and their master in the field.'
Then in fierce anger all at once I launched
All terms of execration at his head,
Bating no word, being maddened by the thought
That I should lose this heirloom, — and to him!
He, at this pass, though not of wrathful mood,
Stung by such utterance, made rejoinder thus:

‘Thou wast not with us here, but wrongfully
Didst bide afar. And, since thou mak’st so bold,
I tell thee, never shalt thou, as thou sayest,
Sail with these arms to Scyros.’ — Thus reviled,
With such an evil echo in mine ear,
I voyage homeward, robbed of mine own right
By that vile offset of an evil tree.
Yet less I blame him than the men in power.
[386-423] For every multitude, be it army or state,
Takes tone from those who rule it, and all taint
Of disobedience from bad counsel springs.
I have spoken. May the Atridae’s enemy
Be dear to Heaven, as he is loved by me!

CH. Mother of mightiest Zeus,1
Feeder of all that live,
Who from thy mountainous breast
Rivers of gold dost give!
To thee, O Earth, I cried that shameful day,
When insolence from Atreus’ sons went forth
Full on our lord: when they bestowed away
His father’s arms to crown Odysseus’ worth;
Thou, whom bull-slaughtering lions yoked bear,
O mighty mother, hear!

PHI. Your coming is commended by a grief
That makes you kindly welcome. For I feel
A chord that vibrates to your voice, and tells,
Thus have Odysseus and the Atridae wrought.
Full well I know, Odysseus’ poisoned tongue
Shrinks from no mischief nor no guileful word
That leads to bad achievement in the end.
This moves not my main marvel, but if one
Saw this and bore it, — Aias of the shield.

NEO. Ah, friend, he was no more. Had he but lived,
This robbery had ne’er been wrought on me.

PHI. What? Is he too departed?

NEO. He is dead

NEO. He is dead.
The light no more beholds him.

PHI. Oh! alas!
But Tydeus' offspring, and the rascal birth
Laërtes bought of Sisyphus, they live:
I know it. For their death were to be wished.

NEO. Yea, be assured, they live and flourish high
Exalted in the host of Argive men.

PHI. And Nestor, my old friend, good aged man,
Is he yet living? Oft he would prevent
Their evils, by the wisdom of his thought.

[424-461] NEO. He too is now in trouble, having lost
Antilochus, the comfort of his age.

PHI. There, there! In one brief word thou hast revealed
The mournful case of twain, whom I would last
Have chosen to hear of as undone. Ah me!
Where must one look? when these are dead, and he,
Odysseus, lives, — and in a time like this,
That craves their presence, and his death for theirs.

NEO. He wrestles cleverly; but, O my friend,
Even ablest wits are ofttimes snared at last.

PHI. Tell me, I pray, what was become of him,
Patroclus, whom thy father loved so well?

NEO. He, too, was gone. I'll teach thee in a word
One truth for all. War doth not willingly
Snatch off the wicked, but still takes the good.

PHI. True! and to prove thy saying, I will inquire
The fate of a poor dastard, of mean worth,
But ever shrewd and nimble with his tongue.

NEO. Whom but Odysseus canst thou mean by this?

PHI. I meant not him. But there was one Thersites,
Who ne'er made conscience to stint speech, where all

Cried ‘Silence!’ Is he living, dost thou know?

NEO. I saw him not, but knew he was alive.

PHI. He must be: for no evil yet was crushed.
The Heavens will ever shield it. ’Tis their sport
To turn back all things rancorous and malign
From going down to the grave, and send instead
The good and true. Oh, how shall we commend
Such dealings, how defend them? When I praise
Things god-like, I find evil in the Gods.

NEO. I, O thou child of a Trachinian sire,
Henceforth will take good care, from far away
To look on Troy and Atreus’ children twain.
Yea, where the trickster lords it o’er the just,
And goodness languishes and rascals rule,
— Such courses I will nevermore endure.
But rock-bound Scyros henceforth shall suffice
To yield me full contentment in my home.
Now, to my vessel! And thou, Poeas’ child,
[462-499] Farewell, right heartily farewell! May Heaven
Grant thy desire, and rid thee of thy plague!
Let us be going, that when God shall give
Fair voyage, that moment we may launch away.

PHI. My son, are ye now setting forth?

NEO. Our time
Bids us go near and look to sail erelong.

PHI. Now, by thy father, by thy mother, — nay,
By all thy love e’er cherished in thy home,
Suppliant I beg thee, leave me not thus lone,
Forlorn in all my misery which thou seest,
In all thou hast heard of here surrounding me!
Stow me with other freightage. Full of care,
I know, and burdensome the charge may prove.
Yet venture! Surely to the noble mind
All shame is hateful and all kindness blest.
And shame would be thy meed, didst thou fail here

But, doing this, thou shalt have glorious fame,
When I return alive to Oeta's vale.
Come, 'tis the labour not of one whole day.
So thou durst take me, fling me where thou wilt
O' the ship, in hold, prow, stern, or wheresoe'er
I least may trouble those on board with me.
Ah! by great Zeus, the suppliant's friend, comply,
My son, be softened! See, where I am fall'n
Thus on my knees before thee, though so weak,
Crippled and powerless. Ah! forsake me not
Thus far from human footstep. Take me, take me!
If only to thy home, or to the town
Of old Chalcodon in Euboea. — From thence
I have not far to Oeta, and the ridge
Of Trachis, and Spercheius' lordly flood.
So thou shalt bless my father with my sight.
And yet long since I fear he may be gone.
For oft I sent him suppliant prayers by men
Who touched this isle, entreating him to fetch
And bear me safely home with his own crew.
But either he is dead, or else, methinks,
It well may be, my messengers made light
Of my concerns, and hastened onward home.
[500-536] But now in thee I find both messenger
And convoy, thou wilt pity me and save.
For, well thou knowest, danger never sleeps,
And fear of dark reverse is always nigh.
Mortals, when free, should look where mischief lurks,
And in their happiest hour consider well
Their life, lest ruin unsuspected come.

CH. Pity him, O my king!2
Many a crushing woe
He telleth, such as I pray
None of my friends may know.
And if, dear master, thou mislikest sore
Yon cruel-hearted lordly pair, I would,
Turning their plan of evil to his good,
On swift ship bear him to his native shore,
Meeting his heart's desire; and free thy path

Meeting his heart's desire; and free thy path
From fear of heavenly wrath.

NEO. Thou mak'st small scruple here; but be advised:
Lest, when this plague on board shall weary thee,
Thy voice should alter from this liberal tone.

CH. No, truly! Fear not thou shalt ever have
Just cause to utter such reproach on me.

NEO. Then sure 'twere shame, should I more backward prove
Than thou, to labour for the stranger's need.
Come, if thou wilt, let us make voyage, and he,
Let him set forth with speed. Our ship shall take him.
He shall not be refused. Only may Heaven
Lead safely hence and to our destined port!

PHI. O morning full of brightness! Kindest friend,
Sweet mariners, how can I make you feel,
In act, how dearly from my heart I love you!
Ye have won my soul. Let us be gone, my son, —
First having said farewell to this poor cave,
My homeless dwelling-place, that thou may'st know,
How barely I have lived, how firm my heart!
Methinks another could not have endured
[537-572] The very sight of what I bore. But I
Through strong necessity have conquered pain.

CH. Stay: let us understand. There come two men
A stranger, with a shipmate of thy crew.
When ye have heard them, ye may then go in.

Enter Messenger, disguised as a merchantman.

MERCHANTMAN. Son of Achilles, my companion here,
Who with two more remained to guard thy ship,
Agreed to help me find thee where thou wert,
Since unexpectedly, through fortune's will,
I meet thee, mooring by the self-same shore.
For like a merchantman, with no great sail,
Making my course from Ilion to my home,
Grape-clustered Peparethos, when I heard

Grape-clustered Peparethos, when I heard
The mariners declare that one and all
Were of thy crew, I would not launch again,
Without a word, till we had told our news. —
Methinks thou knowest nought of thine own case,
What new devices of the Argive chiefs
Surround thee; nor devices only now,
But active deeds, no longer unperformed.

NEO. Well, stranger, for the kindness thou hast shown, —
Else were I base, — my heart must thank thee still.
But tell me what thou meanest, that I may learn
What new-laid plot thou bring'st me from the camp.

MER. Old Phoenix, Acamas and Demophon
Are gone in thy pursuit with ships and men.

NEO. To bring me back with reasons or perforce?

MER. I know not. What I heard, I am here to tell.

NEO. How? And is this in act? Are they set forth
To please the Atridae, Phoenix and the rest?

MER. The thing is not to do, but doing now.

NEO. What kept Odysseus back, if this be so,
From going himself? Had he some cause for fear?

MER. He and the son of Tydeus, when our ship
Hoist sail, were gone to fetch another man.

NEO. For whom could he himself be sailing forth?

[573-607] MER. For some one, — but first tell me, whispering low
Whate'er thou speakest, — who is this I see?

NEO. (speaking aloud).
This, sir, is Philoctetes the renowned.

MER. (aside to NEOPTOLEMUS).
Without more question, snatch thyself away
And sail forth from this land.

PHI. What saith he, boy?
Through what dark traffic is the mariner
Betraying me with whispering in thine ear?

NEO. I have not caught it, but whate'er he speaks
He must speak openly to us and thee.

MER. Seed of Achilles, let me not offend
The army by my words! Full many a boon,
Being poor, I reap from them for service done.

NEO. The Atridae are my foes; the man you see
Is my fast friend, because he hates them sore.
Then, if you come in kindness, you must hide
Nothing from him or me of all thou hast heard.

MER. Look what thou doest, my son!

NEO. I mark it well.

MER. Thou shalt be answerable.

NEO. Content: but speak.

MER. Then hear me. These two men whom I have named,
Diomedes and Odysseus, are set forth
Engaged on oath to bring this man by force
If reasons fail. The Achaeans every one
Have heard this plainly from Odysseus' mouth.
He was the louder and more confident.

NEO. Say, for what cause, after so long a time,
Can Atreus' sons have turned their thoughts on him,
Whom long they had cast forth? What passing touch
Of conscience moved them, or what stroke from Heaven,
Whose wrath requites all wicked deeds of men?

MER. Methinks thou hast not heard what I will now
Unfold to thee. There was a princely seer,
A son of Priam, Helenus by name,
Whom he for whom no word is bad enough,
[608-645] Crafty Odysseus, sallying forth alone

One night, had taken, and in bonds displayed
‘Fore all the Achaeans, a right noble prey.
He, ‘mid his other prophecies, foretold
No Grecian force should sack Troy’s citadel,
Till with fair reasons they had brought this man
From Lemnos isle, his lonely dwelling-place.
When thus the prophet spake, Laërtes’ son
Straight undertook to fetch this man, and show him
To all the camp: — he hoped, with fair consent:
But else, perforce. — And, if he failed in this,
Whoever would might smite him on the head.
My tale is told, dear youth. I counsel speed
To thee and to the friend for whom thou carest.

PHI. Ah me, unhappy! has that rascal knave
Sworn to fetch me with reasons to their camp?
As likely might his reasons bring me back,
Like his begetter, from the house of death.

MER. You talk of what I know not. I will go
Shipward. May God be with you for all good.[Exit

PHI. Is not this terrible, Laërtes’ son
Should ever think to bring me with soft words
And show me from his deck to all their host?
No! Sooner will I listen to the tongue
Of the curs’d basilisk that thus hath maim’d me.
Ay, but he’ll venture anything in word
Or deed. And now I know he will be here.
Come, O my son, let us be gone, while seas
And winds divide us from Odysseus’ ship.
Let us depart. Sure timely haste brings rest
And quiet slumber when the toil is done.

NEO. Shall we not sail when this south-western wind
Hath fallen, that now is adverse to our course?

PHI. All winds are fair to him who flies from woe.

NEO. Nay, but this head-wind hinders them no less.

PHI. No head-wind hinders pirates on their way,
When violence and rapine lead them on.

NEO. Well, then, let us be going, if you will;
[646-675] When you have taken from within the cave
What most you need and value.

PHI. Though my all
Be little, there is that I may not lose.

NEO. What can there be that we have not on board?

PHI. A leaf I have found, wherewith I still the rage
Of my sore plague, and lull it quite to rest.

NEO. Well, bring it forth. — What? Is there something more?

PHI. If any of these arrows here are fallen,
I would not leave them for a casual prey.

NEO. How? Do I see thee with the marvellous bow?

PHI. Here in my hand. The world hath only one.

NEO. And may one touch and handle it, and gaze
With reverence, as on a thing from Heaven?

PHI. Thou mayest, my son. This and whate'er of mine
May stead thee, 'tis thy privilege to enjoy.

NEO. In very truth I long for it, but so,
That longing waits on leave. Am I permitted?

PHI. Thou art, my son, — and well thou speakest, — thou art.
Thou, that hast given me light and life, the joy
Of seeing Mount Oeta and my father's home,
With all I love there, and his aged head, —
Thou that hast raised me far above my foes
Who triumphed! Thou may'st take it in thine hand,
And, — when thou hast given it back to me, — may'st vaunt
Alone of mortals for thine excellence
To have held this in thy touch. I, too, at first,
Received it as a boon for kindness done.

NEO. Well, go within.

PHI. Nay, I must take thee too.
My sickness craves thee for its comforter.
[PHILOCTETES and NEOPTOLEMUS go into the cave

[676-711]

CHORUS.

In fable I have heard,I 1
Though sight hath ne’er confirmed the word,
How he who attempted once the couch supreme,
To a whirling wheel by Zeus the all-ruler bound,
Tied head and heel, careering ever round,
Atones his impious unsubstantial dream.
Of no man else, through eye or ear,
Have I discerned a fate more full of fear
Than yonder sufferer’s of the cureless wound:
Who did no violence, defrauded none: —
A just man, had he dwelt among the just
Unworthily behold him thrust
Alone to hear the billows roar
That break around a rugged shore!
How could he live, whose life was thus consumed with moan?

Where neighbour there was none:I 2
No arm to stay him wandering lone,
Unevenly, with stumbling steps and sore;
No friend in need, no kind inhabitant,
To minister to his importunate want,
No heart whereto his pangs he might deplore.
None who, whene’er the gory flow
Was rushing hot, might healing herbs bestow,
Or cull from teeming Earth some genial plant
To allay the anguish of malignant pain
And soothe the sharpness of his poignant woe.
Like infant whom the nurse lets go,
With tottering movement here and there,
He crawled for comfort, whensoe’er
His soul-devouring plague relaxed its cruel strain

His soul-devouring plague relaxed its cruel strain.

Not fed with foison of all-teeming EarthII 1
Whence we sustain us, ever-toiling men,
But only now and then
With wingèd things, by his wing'd shafts brought low,
He stayed his hunger from his bow.
[712-749] Poor soul, that never through ten years of dearth
Had pleasure from the fruitage of the vine,
But seeking to some standing pool,
Nor clear nor cool,
Foul water heaved to head for lack of heartening wine.

But now, consorted with the hero's child,II 2
He winneth greatness and a joyful change;
Over the water wild
Borne by a friendly bark beneath the range
Of Oeta, where Spercheius fills
Wide channels winding among lovely hills
Haunted of Melian nymphs, till he espies
The roof-tree of his father's hall,
And high o'er all
Shines the bronze shield of him, whose home is in the skies.
[NEOPTOLEMUS comes out of the cave, followed by PHILOCTETES in pain

NEO. Prithee, come on! Why dost thou stand aghast,
Voiceless, and thus astonied in thine air?

PHI. Oh! oh!

NEO. What?

PHI. Nothing. Come my son, fear nought.

NEO. Is pain upon thee? Hath thy trouble come?

PHI. No pain, no pain! 'Tis past; I am easy now.
Ye heavenly powers!

NEO. Why dost thou groan aloud,
And cry to Heaven?

PHI. To come and save. Kind Heaven!

Oh, oh!

NEO. What is ‘t? Why silent? Wilt not speak?
I see thy misery.

PHI. Oh! I am lost, my son!
I cannot hide it from you. Oh! it shoots,
It pierces. Oh unhappy! Oh! my woe!
I am lost, my son, I am devoured. Oh me!
Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh! Pain! pain! Oh pain! oh pain!
Child, if a sword be to thine hand, smite hard,
Shear off my foot! heed not my life! Quick, come!

[751-786] NEO. What hath so suddenly arisen, that thus
Thou mak’st ado and groanest o’er thyself?

PHI. Thou knowest.

NEO. What know I?

PHI. O! thou knowest, my son!

NEO. I know not.

PHI. How? Not know? Ah me! Pain, pain!

NEO. Thy plague is a sore burden, heavy and sore.

PHI. Sore? ’Tis unutterable. Have pity on me!

NEO. What shall I do?

PHI. Do not in fear forsake me.
This wandering evil comes in force again,
Hungry as ere it fed.

NEO. O hapless one!
Thrice hapless in thy manifold distress!
What wilt thou? Shall I raise thee on mine arm?

PHI. Nay, but receiving from my hand the bow,
As late thou didst desire me, keep it safe
And guard it, till the fury of my pain

Pass over me and cease. For when ’tis spent,
Slumber will seize me, else it ne’er would end.
I must sleep undisturbed. But if meanwhile
They come, — by Heaven I charge thee, in no wise,
Willingly nor perforce, let them have this!
Else thou wilt be the slayer of us both;
Of me thy suppliant, and of thyself.

NEO. Fear not my care. No hand shall hold these arms
But thine and mine. Give, and Heaven bless the deed!

PHI. I give them; there, my son! But look to Heaven
And pray no envy smite thee, nor such bane
In having them, as fell on me and him
Who bore them formerly.

NEO. O grant it, Gods!
And grant us fair and happy voyage, where’er
Our course is shaped and righteous Heaven shall guide.

PHI. Ah! but I fear, my son, thy prayer is vain:
For welling yet again from depths within,
This gory ooze is dripping. It will come!
I know it will. O, foot, torn helpless thing,
[786-816] What wilt thou do to me? Ah! ah! It comes,
It is at hand. ’Tis here! Woe’s me, undone!
I have shown you all. Stay near me. Go not far:
Ah! ah!
O island king, I would this agony
Might cleave thy bosom through and through! Woe, woe!
Woe! Ah! ye two commanders of the host,
Agamemnon, Menelaüs, O that ye,
Another ten years’ durance in my room
Might nurse this malady! O Death, Death, Death!
I call thee daily — wilt thou never come?
Will it not be? — My son, thou noble boy,
If thou art noble, take and burn me there
Aloft in yon all-worshipped Lemnian fire!
Yea, when the bow thou keep’st was my reward,
I did like service for the child of Heaven.

How now, my son?
What say’st? Art silent? Where — where art thou, boy?

NEO. My heart is full, and groaning o’er thy woes.

PHI. Nay, yet have comfort. This affliction oft
Goes no less swiftly than it came. I pray thee,
Stand fast and leave me not alone!

NEO. Fear nought.
We will not stir.

PHI. Wilt thou remain?

NEO. Be sure of it.

PHI. I’ll not degrade thee with an oath, my son.

NEO. Rest satisfied. I may not go without thee.

PHI. Thy hand, to pledge me that!

NEO. There, I will stay.

PHI. Now, now, aloft!

NEO. Where mean’st thou?

PHI. Yonder aloft!

NEO. Whither? Thou rav’st. Why starest thou at the sky?

PHI. Now, let me go.

NEO. Where?

PHI. Let me go, I say!

[817-847] NEO. I will not.

PHI. You will kill me. Let me go!

NEO. Well, thou know’st best I hold thee not.

PHI. O Earth,

I die. receive me to thy breast! This pain
Subdues me utterly, I cannot stand.

NEO. Methinks he will be fast in slumber soon
That head sinks backward, and a clammy sweat
Bathes all his limbs, while from his foot hath burst
A vein, dark bleeding. Let us leave him, friends,
In quietness, till he hath fallen to sleep.

CHORUS

Lord of the happiest life,I
Sleep, thou that know’st not strife,
That know’st not grief,
Still wafting sure relief,
Come, saviour now!
Thy healing balm is spread
Over this pain worn head,
Quench not the beam that gives calm to his brow.

Look, O my lord, to thy path,
Either to go or to stay
How is my thought to proceed?
What is our cause for delay?
Look! Opportunity’s power,
Fitting the task to the hour,
Giveth the race to the swift.

NEO. He hears not. But I see that to have ta’en
His bow without him were a bootless gain
He must sail with us. So the god hath said
Heaven hath decreed this garland for his head:
And to have failed with falsehood were a meed
Of shameful soilure for a shameless deed.

CH. God shall determine the end — II
But for thine answer, friend,
Waft soft words low!
All sick men’s sleep, we know,
[848-879] Hath open eye;
Their quickly ruffling mind
Quivers in lightest wind,
Sleepless in slumber new danger to spy.

Think, O my lord, of thy path,
Secretly look forth afar,
What wilt thou do for thy need?
How with the wise wilt thou care?
If toward the nameless thy heart

Chooseth this merciful part,
Huge are the dangers that drift.

The wind is fair, my son, the wind is fair,
The man is dark and helpless, stretched in night.
(O kind, warm sleep that calmest human care!)
Powerless of hand and foot and ear and sight,
Blind, as one lying in the house of death.
(Think well if here thou utterest timely breath.)
This, O my son, is all my thought can find,
Best are the toils that without frightening bind.

NEO. Hush! One word more were madness. He revives.
His eye hath motion. He uplifts his head.

PHI. Fair daylight following sleep, and ye, dear friends,
Faithful beyond all hope in tending me!
I never could have dreamed that thou, dear youth,
Couldst thus have borne my sufferings and stood near
So full of pity to relieve my pain.
Not so the worthy generals of the host; —
This princely patience was not theirs to show.
Only thy noble nature, nobly sprung,
Made light of all the trouble, though oppressed
With fetid odours and unceasing cries.
And now, since this my plague would seem to yield
Some pause and brief forgetfulness of pain,
With thine own hand, my son, upraise me here,
And set me on my feet, that, when my strength
[880-913] After exhaustion shall return again,
We may move shoreward and launch forth with speed.

NEO. I feel unhoped-for gladness when I see
Thy painless gaze, and hear thy living breath,
For thine appearance and surroundings both
Were deathlike. But arise! Or, if thou wilt,
These men shall raise thee. For they will not shrink
From toil which thou and I at once enjoin.

PHI. Right, right, my son! But lift me thine own self,
As I am sure thou meanest. Let these be

As I am sure thou meanest. Let these be,
Lest they be burdened with the noisome smell
Before the time. Enough for them to bear
The trouble on board.

NEO. I will; stand up, endure!

PHI. Fear not. Old habit will enable me.

NEO. O me!
What shall I do? Now ’tis my turn to exclaim!

PHI. What canst thou mean? What change is here, my son?

NEO. I know not how to shift the troublous word.
’Tis hopeless.

PHI. What is hopeless? Speak not so,
Dear child!

NEO. But so my wretched lot hath fallen.

PHI. Ah! Can it be, the offence of my disease
Hath moved thee not to take me now on board?

NEO. All is offence to one who hath forced himself
From the true bent to an unbecoming deed.

PHI. Nought misbecoming to thyself or sire
Doest thou or speak’st, befriending a good man.

NEO. My baseness will appear. That wrings my soul.

PHI. Not in thy deeds. But for thy words, I fear me!

NEO. O Heaven! Must double vileness then be mine
Both shameful silence and most shameful speech?

PHI. Or my discernment is at fault, or thou
Mean’st to betray me and make voyage without me.

NEO. Nay, not without thee, there is my distress!
Lest I convey thee to thy bitter grief.

[914-946] PHI. How? How, dear youth? I do not understand.

NEO. Here I unveil it. Thou art to sail to Troy,
To join the chieftains and the Achaean host.

PHI. What do I hear? Ah!

NEO. Grieve not till you learn.

PHI. Learn what? What wilt thou make of me? What mean’st thou?

NEO. First to release thee from this plague, and then
With thee to go and take the realm of Troy.

PHI. And is this thine intent?

NEO. ’Tis so ordained
Unchangeably. Be not dismayed! ’Tis so.

PHI. Me miserable! I am betrayed, undone!
What guile is here? My bow! give back my bow!

NEO. I may not. Interest, and duty too,
Force me to obey commandment.

PHI. O thou fire,
Thou terror of the world! Dark instrument
Of ever-hateful guile! — What hast thou done?
How thou hast cheated me! Art not ashamed
To look on him that sued to thee for shelter?
O heart of stone, thou hast stolen my life away
With yonder bow! — Ah, yet I beg of thee,
Give it me back, my son, I entreat thee, give!
By all thy father worshipped, rob me not
Of life! — Ah me! Now he will speak no more,
But turns away, obdúrate to retain it.
O ye, my comrades in this wilderness,
Rude creatures of the rocks, O promontories,
Creeks, precipices of the hills, to you
And your familiar presence I complain
Of this foul trespass of Achilles’ son.
Sworn to convey me home, to Troy he bears me.

And under pledge of his right hand hath ta’en
And holds from me perforce my wondrous bow,
The sacred gift of Zeus-born Heracles,
Thinking to wave it midst the Achaean host
Triumphantly for his. In conquering me
He vaunts as of some valorous feat, and knows not
He is spoiling a mere corse, an empty dream,
[947-980] The shadow of a vapour. In my strength
He ne’er had vanquished me. Even as I am,
He could not, but by guile. Now, all forlorn,
I am abused, deceived. What must I do?
Nay, give it me. Nay, yet be thy true self!
Thou art silent. I am lost. O misery!
Rude face of rock, back I return to thee
And thy twin gateway, robbed of arms and food,
To wither in thy cave companionless: —
No more with these mine arrows to destroy
Or flying bird or mountain-roving beast.
But, all unhappy! I myself must be
The feast of those on whom I fed, the chase
Of that I hunted, and shall dearly pay
In bloody quittance for their death, through one
Who seemed all ignorant of sinful guile.
Perish, — not till I am certain if thy heart
Will change once more, — if not, my curse on thee!

CH. What shall we do, my lord? We wait thy word
Or to sail now, or yield to his desire.

NEO. My heart is pressed with a strange pity for him,
Not now beginning, but long since begun.

PHI. Ay, pity me, my son! by all above,
Make not thy name a scorn by wronging me!

NEO. O! I am troubled sore. What must I do?
Would I had never left mine island home!

PHI. Thou art not base, but seemest to have learnt
Some baseness from base men. Now, as ’tis meet,
Be better guided — leave me mine arms, and go

Be better guided — leave the frail arms, and go.

NEO. (to Chorus).
What shall we do?

Enter ODYSSEUS.

ODYSSEUS. What art thou doing, knave?
Give me that bow, and haste thee back again.

PHI. Alas! What do I hear? Odysseus' voice?

OD. Be sure of that, Odysseus, whom thou seest.

PHI. Oh, I am bought and sold, undone! 'Twas he
That kidnapped me, and robbed me of my bow.

OD. Yea. I deny it not. Be sure, 'twas I.

[981-1015] PHI. Give back, my son, the bow; release it!

OD. That,
Though he desire it, he shall never do.
Thou too shalt march along, or these shall force thee.

PHI. They force me! O thou boldest of bad men!
They force me?

OD. If thou com'st not willingly.

PHI. O Lemnian earth and thou almighty flame,
Hephaestos' workmanship, shall this be borne,
That he by force must drag me from your care?

OD. 'Tis Zeus, I tell thee, monarch of this isle,
Who thus hath willed. I am his minister.

PHI. Wretch, what vile words thy wit hath power to say!
The gods are liars when invoked by thee.

OD. Nay, 'tis their truth compels thee to this voyage.

PHI. I will not have it so.

OD. I will. Thou shalt.

PHI. Woe for my wretchedness! My father, then,
Begat no freeman, but a slave in me.

OD. Nay, but the peer of noblest men, with whom
Thou art to take and ravage Troy with might.

PHI. Never, — though I must suffer direst woe, —
While this steep Lemnian ground is mine to tread!

OD. What now is thine intent?

PHI. Down from the crag
This head shall plunge and stain the crag beneath.

OD. (to the Attendants.)
Ay, seize and bind him. Baffle him in this.

PHI. Poor hands, for lack of your beloved string,
Caught by this craven! O corrupted soul!
How thou hast undermined me, having taken
To screen thy quest this youth to me unknown,
Far worthier of my friendship than of thine,
Who knew no better than to obey command.
Even now ’tis manifest he burns within
With pain for his own error and my wrong.
But, though unwilling and mapt for ill,
Thy crafty, mean, and cranny spying soul
Too well hath lessoned him in sinful lore.
[1016-1052] Now thou hast bound me, O thou wretch, and thinkest
To take me from this coast, where thou didst cast me
Outlawed and desolate, a corpse ‘mongst men.
Oh!
I curse thee now, as ofttimes in the past:
But since Heaven yields me nought but bitterness,
Thou livest and art blithe, while ’tis my pain
To live on in my misery, laughed to scorn
By thee and Atreus’ sons, those generals twain
Whom thou art serving in this chase. But thou
With strong compulsion and deceit was driven

Troyward, whilst I, poor victim, of free will
Took my seven ships and sailed there, yet was thrown
Far from all honour, — as thou sayest, by them,
But, as they turn the tale, by thee. — And now
Why fetch me hence and take me? To what end?
I am nothing, dead to you this many a year.
How, O thou Heaven-abhorred! am I not now
Lame and of evil smell? how shall ye vaunt
Before the gods drink-offering or the fat
Of victims, if I sail among your crew?
For this, as ye professed, was the chief cause
Why ye disowned me. Perish! — So ye shall,
For the wrong done me, if the Heavens be just.
And that they are, I know. Else had ye ne'er
Sailed on this errand for an outcast wretch,
Had they not pricked your heart with thoughts of me.
Oh, if ye pity me, chastising powers,
And thou, the Genius of my land, revenge,
Revenge this crime on all their heads at once!
My life is pitiable; but if I saw
Their ruin, I would think me well and strong.

CH. How full of bitterness is his resolve,
Wrathfully spoken with unbending will!

OD. I might speak long in answer, did the time
Give scope, but now one thing is mine to say.
I am known to vary with the varying need;
And when 'tis tried, who can be just and good,
My peer will not be found for piety.
But though on all occasions covetous
[1053-1092] Of victory, this once I yield to thee,
And willingly. Unhand him there. Let go!
Leave him to stay. What further use of thee,
When we have ta'en these arms? Have we not Teucer,
Skilled in this mystery? Yea, I may boast
Myself thine equal both in strength and aim
To wield them. Fare thee well, then! Thou art free
To roam thy barren isle. We need thee not.

Let us be going! And perchance thy gift
May bring thy destined glory to my brow.

PHI. What shall I do? Alas, shalt thou be seen
Graced with mine arms amongst Achaean men?

OD. No more! I am going.

PHI. O Achilles' child!
Wilt thou, too, vanish? Must I lose thy voice?

OD. Come on, and look not, noble though thou be,
Lest thou undo our fortune.

PHI. Mariners,
Must ye, too, leave me thus disconsolate?
Will ye not pity me?

CH. Our captain's here.
Whate'er he saith to thee, that we too speak.

NEO. My chief will call me weakling, soft of heart;
But go not yet, since our friend bids you stay.
Till we have prayed, and all be ready on board.
Meanwhile, perchance, he may conceive some thought
That favours our design. We two will start;
And ye, be swift to speed forth at our call.[Exit

MONODY.

PHI. O cavern of the hollow rock,I 1
Frosty and stifling in the seasons' change!
How I seem fated never more to range
From thy sad covert, that hath felt the shock
Of pain on pain, steeped with my wretchedness.
Now thou wilt be my comforter in death!
Grief haunted harbour, choked with my distress!
Tell me, what hope is mine of daily food,
Who will be careful for my good?
[1093-1132] I fail. Ye cowering creatures of the sky,
Oh, as ye fly,

Snatch me, borne upward on the blast’s sharp breath!

CH. 1. Thou child of misery!
No mightier power hath this decreed,
But thine own will and deed
Hath bound thee thus in grief,
Since, when kind Heaven had sent relief
And shown the path of wisdom firm and sure,
Thou still hast chosen this evil to endure.

PHI. O hapless life, sore bruised with pain!I 2
No more with living mortal may I dwell,
But ever pining in this desert cell
With lonely grief, all famished must remain
And perish; for what food is mine to share,
When this strong arm no longer wields my bow,
Whose fleet shafts flew to smite the birds of air
I was o’erthrown by words, words dark and blind,
Low-creeping from a traitorous mind!
O might I see him, whose unrighteous thought
This ruin wrought,
Plagued for no less a period with like woe!

CH. 2. Not by our craft thou art caught,
But Destiny divine hath wrought
The net that holds thee bound.
Aim not at us the sound
Of thy dread curse with dire disaster fraught.
On others let that light! ’Tis our true care
Thou should’st not scorn our love in thy despair.

PHI. Now, seated by the shoreII 1
Of heaving ocean hoar,
He mocks me, waving high
The sole support of my precarious being,
The bow which none e’er held but I.
O treasure of my heart, torn from this hand,
That loved thy touch, — if thou canst understand,
How sad must be thy look in seeing
Thy master destined now no more,

Like Heracles of yore,
[1133-1168] To wield thee with an archer’s might!
But in the grasp of an all-scheming wight,
O bitter change! thou art plied;
And swaying ever by his side,
Shalt view his life of dark malignity,
Teeming with guileful shames, like those he wrought on me.

CH. 3. Nobly to speak for the right
Is manly and strong;
But not with an envious blight
To envenom the tongue;
He to serve all his friends of the fleet,
One obeying a many-voiced word,
Through the minist’ring craft of our lord
Hath but done what was meet.

PHI. Come, legions of the wild,II 2
Of aspect fierce or mild,
Fowl from the fields of air,
And beasts that roam with bright untroubled gaze,
No longer bounding from my lair
Fly mine approach! Now freely without fear
Ye may surround my covert and come near,
Treading the savage rock-strewn ways.
The might I had is no more mine,
Stolen with those arms divine.
This fort hath no man to defend.
Come satisfy your vengeful jaws, and rend
These quivering tainted limbs!
Already hovering death bedims
My fainting sense. Who thus can live on air,
Tasting no gift of earth that breathing mortals share?

CH. 4. Ah! do not shrink from thy friend,
If love thou reverest,
But know ’tis for thee to forfend
The fate which thou fearest.
The lot thou hast here to deplore,
Is sad evermore to maintain,

[1169-1202] And hardship in sickness is sore,
But sorest in pain.

PHI. Kindest of all that e’er beforeIII
Have trod this shore,
Again thou mind’st me of mine ancient woe!
Why wilt thou ruin me? What wouldst thou do?

CH. 5. How mean’st thou?

PHI. If to Troy, of me abhorred
Thou e’er hast hoped to lead me with thy lord.

CH. 6. So I judge best.

PHI. Begone at once, begone!

CH. 7. Sweet is that word, and swiftly shall be done!
Let us be gone, each to his place on board.
[The Chorus make as if they were going

PHI. Nay, by dear Zeus, to whom all suppliants moan
Leave me not yet!

CH. 8. Keep measure in thy word.

PHI. Stay, by Heaven, stay!

CH. 9. What wilt thou say?

PHI. O misery! O cruel power
That rul’st this hour!
I am destroyed. Ah me!
O poor torn limb, what shall I do with thee
Through all my days to be?
Ah, strangers, come, return, return!

CH. 10. What new command are we to learn
Crossing thy former mind?

PHI. Ah! yet be kind.
Reprove not him, whose tongue, with grief distraught,
Obeys not, in dark storms, the helm of thought!

CH. 11. Come, poor friend, the way we call.

PHI. Never, learn it once for all!
Not though he, whom Heaven obeys,
Blast me with fierce lightning's blaze!
Perish Troy, and all your host,
That have chosen, to their cost,
To despise and cast me forth,
Since my wound obscured my worth!
Ah, but, strangers, if your sense
[1203-1233] Hath o'ermastered this offence,
Yield but one thing to my prayer!

CH. 12. What wouldst thou have?

PHI. Some weapon bare,
Axe or sword or sharpened dart,
Bring it to content my heart.

CH. 13. What is thy new intent?

PHI. To sever point by point
This body, joint from joint.
On bloody death my mind is bent.

CH. 14. Wherefore?

PHI. To see my father's face.

CH. 15. Where upon earth?

PHI. He hath no place
Where sun doth shine, but in the halls of night.
O native country, land of my delight,
Would I were blest one moment with thy sight!
Why did I leave thy sacred dew
And loose my vessels from thy shore,
To join the hateful Danaän crew
And lend them succour? Oh, I am no more!

LEADER OF CH.
Long since thou hadst seen me nearing yonder ship,

Had I not spied Odysseus and the son
Of great Achilles hastening to our side.

OD. Wilt thou not tell me why thou art hurrying
This backward journey with reverted speed?

NEO. To undo what I have wrongly done to-day.

OD. Thy words appal me. What is wrongly done?

NEO. When in obeying thee and all the host —

OD. Thou didst what deed that misbecame thy life?

NEO. I conquered with base stratagem and fraud —

OD. Whom? What new plan is rising in thy mind?

NEO. Not new. But to the child of Poeas here —

OD. What wilt thou do? I quake with strange alarm.

NEO. From whom I took these weapons, back again ——

OD. O Heaven! thou wilt not give them! Mean’st thou this?

[1234-1262] NEO. Yea, for I have them through base sinful means.

OD. I pray thee, speak’st thou thus to anger me?

NEO. If the truth anger thee, the truth is said.

OD. Achilles’ son! What word is fallen from thee?

NEO. Must the same syllables be thrice thrown forth?

OD. Once was too much. Would they had ne’er been said!

NEO. Enough. Thou hast heard my purpose clearly told.

OD. I know what power shall thwart thee in the deed.

NEO. Whose will shall hinder me?

OD. The Achaean host
And I among them

And Pallene them.

NEO. Thou’rt sharp-witted, sure!
But little wit or wisdom show’st thou here.

OD. Neither thy words nor thy design is wise.

NEO. But if ’tis righteous, that is better far.

OD. How righteous, to release what thou hast ta’en
By my device?

NEO. I sinned a shameful sin,
And I will do mine utmost to retrieve it.

OD. How? Fear’st thou not the Achaeans in this act?

NEO. In doing right I fear not them nor thee.

OD. I call thy power in question.

NEO. Then I’ll fight,
Not with Troy’s legions, but with thee.

OD. Come on!
Let fortune arbitrate.

NEO. Thou seest my hand
Feeling the hilt.

OD. And me thou soon shalt see
Doing the like and dallying not! — And yet
I will not touch thee, but will go and tell
The army, that shall wreak this on thy head.[Exit

NEO. Thou show’st discretion: which if thou preserve,
Thou may’st maintain a path exempt from pain.
Ho! son of Poeas, Philoctetes, come
And leave thy habitation in the rock.

[1263-1294] PHI. What noise again is troubling my poor cave?
Why do ye summon me? What crave ye, sirs?
Ha! ’tis some knavery. Are ye come to add
Some monster evil to my mountainous woe?

NEO. Fear not, but hearken to what now I speak.

PHI. I needs must fear thee, whose fair words erewhile
Brought me to bitter fortune.

NEO. May not men
Repent and change?

PHI. Such wast thou in thy talk,
When thou didst rob me of my bow, — so bright
Without, so black within.

NEO. Ah, but not now,
Assure thee! Only let me hear thy will,
Is ‘t constant to remain here and endure,
Or to make voyage with us?

PHI. Stop, speak no more!
Idle and vain will all thine utterance be.

NEO. Thou art so resolved?

PHI. More firmly than I say.

NEO. I would I might have brought thee to my mind,
But since my words are out of tune, I have done.

PHI. Thou wert best. No word of thine can touch my soul
Or win me to thy love, who by deceit
Hast reft my life away. And then thou com’st
To school me, — of noblest father, basest son!
Perish, the Atridae first of all, and then
Laërtes’ child, and thou!

NEO. Curse me no more,
But take this hallowed weapon from my hand.

PHI. What words are these? Am I again deceived?

NEO. No, by the holiest name of Zeus on high!

PHI. O voice of gladness, if thy speech be true!

NEO. The deed shall prove it. Only reach thy hand

NEO. The deed shall prove it. Only reach thy hand,
And be again sole master of thy bow.[ODYSSEUS appears

OD. But I make protest, in the sight of Heaven,
For Atreus' sons, and all the Achaean host.

[1295-1330] PHI. Dear son, whose voice disturbs us? Do I hear
Odysseus?

OD. Ay, and thou behold'st him nigh,
And he shall force thee to the Trojan plain,
Howe'er Achilles' offspring make or mar.

PHI. This shaft shall bear thee sorrow for that boast.

NEO. Let it not fly, by Heaven!

PHI. Dear child, let go
Mine arm!

NEO. I will not.[Exit ODYSSEUS

PHI. Ah! Why hast thou robbed
My bow of bringing down mine enemy?

NEO. This were ignoble both for thee and me.

PHI. One thing is manifest, the first o' the host
Lying forerunners of the Achaean band,
Are brave with words, but cowards with the steel.

NEO. Well, now the bow is thine. Thou hast no cause
For blame or anger any more 'gainst me.

PHI. None. Thou hast proved thy birthright, dearest boy.
Not from the loins of Sisyphus thou earnest,
But from Achilles, who in life was held
Noblest of men alive, and now o' the dead.

NEO. It gladdens me that thou shouldst speak in praise
Both of my sire and me. But hear me tell
The boon for which I sue thee. — Mortal men
Must bear such evils as high Heaven ordains;

But those afflicted by self-chosen ills,
Like thine to-day, receive not from just men
Or kind indulgence or compassionate thought.
And thou art restive grown, and wilt not hearken,
But though one counsel thee with kind'st intent,
Wilt take him for a dark malignant foe.
Yet, calling Zeus to witness for my soul,
Once more I will speak. Know this, and mark it well:
Thou bear'st this sickness by a heavenly doom,
Through coming near to Chrysa's sentinel,
The lurking snake, that guards the sky-roofed fold.
And from this plague thou ne'er shall find reprieve
[1330-1368] While the same Sun god rears him from the east
And droops to west again, till thou be come
Of thine own willing mind to Troia's plain,
Where our physicians, sons of Phoebus' child,
Shall soothe thee from thy sore, and thou with me
And with this bow shalt take Troy's citadel.
How do I know this? I will tell thee straight
We have a Trojan captive, Helenus,
Both prince and prophet, who hath clearly told
This must be so, yea, and ere harvest time
This year, great Troy must fall, else if his words
Be falsified, who will may slay the seer.
Now, since thou know'st of this, yield thy consent;
For glorious is the gain, being singled forth
From all the Greeks as noblest, first to come
To healing hands, and then to win renown
Unrivalled, vanquishing all tearful Troy.

PHI. Oh how I hate my life! Why must it keep
This breathing form from sinking to the shades?
How can I prove a rebel to his mind
Who thus exhorts me with affectionate heart?
And yet, oh misery! must I give way?
Then how could I endure the light of heaven?
With whom could I exchange a word? Ay me!
Eyes that have seen each act of my sad life,
How could ye bear it, to behold the sons

Of Atreus, my destroyers, comrades now
And friends! Laërtes' wicked son, my friend!
And less I feel the grief of former wrong
Than shudder with expectance of fresh harm
They yet may work on me. For when the mind
Hath once been mother of an evil brood,
It nurses nought but evils. Yea, at thee
I marvel. Thou should'st ne'er return to Troy,
Nor suffer me to go, when thou remember'st
What insult they have done thee, ravishing
Thy father's rights from thee. And wilt thou then
Sail to befriend them, pressing me in aid?
Nay, do not, son; but, even as thou hast sworn,
Convey me home, and thou, in Scyros dwelling,
[1369-1402] Leave to their evil doom those evil men.
So thou shalt win a twofold gratitude
From me and from my father, and not seem,
Helping vile men, to be as vile as they.

NEO. 'Tis fairly spoken. Yet I would that thou
Relying on my word and on Heaven's aid,
Would'st voyage forth from Lemnos with thy friend.

PHI. Mean'st thou to Troy, and to the hateful sons
Of Atreus, me, with this distressful limb?

NEO. Nay, but to those that will relieve the pain
Of thy torn foot and heal thee of thy plague.

PHI. Thy words are horrible. What mean'st thou, boy?

NEO. The act I deem the noblest for us both.

PHI. Wilt thou speak so? Where is thy fear of Heaven?

NEO. Why should I fear, when I see certain gain?

PHI. Gain for the sons of Atreus, or for me?

NEO. Methinks a friend should give thee friendly counsel.

PHI. Friendly, to hand me over to my foes?

NEO. Ah, be not hardened in thy misery!

PHI. I know thou wilt ruin me by what thou speakest.

NEO. Not I. The case is dark to thee, I see.

PHI. I know the Atreidae cast me on this rock.

NEO. But how, if they should save thee afterward?

PHI. They ne’er shall make me see Troy with my will.

NEO. Hard is my fortune, then, if by no sleight
Of reasoning I can draw thee to my mind.
For me, ‘twere easiest to end speech, that thou
Might’st live on as thou livest in hopeless pain.

PHI. Then leave me to my fate! — But thou hast touched
My right hand with thine own, and given consent
To bear me to my home. Do this, dear son!
And do not linger to take thought of Troy.
Enough that name hath echoed in my groans.

NEO. If thou wilt, let us be going.

PHI. Nobly hast thou said the word.

[1402-1436] NEO. Lean thy steps on mine.

PHI. As firmly as my foot will strength afford.

NEO. Ah! but how shall I escape Achaean anger?

PHI. Do not care!

NEO. Ah! but should they spoil my country!

PHI. I to shield thee will be there.

NEO. How to shield me, how to aid me?

PHI. With the shafts of Heracles
I will scare them.

NEO. Give thy blessing to this isle, and come in peace.

HERACLES appears from above.

HERACLES. First, son of Poeas, wait till thou hast heard
The voice of Heracles, and weighed his word.
Him thou beholdest from the Heavenly seat
Come down, for thee leaving the blest retreat,
To tell thee all high Zeus intends, and stay
Thy purpose in the journey of to-day.
Then hear me, first how after my long toils
By strange adventure I have found and won
Immortal glory, which thine eyes perceive;
And the like lot, I tell thee, shall be thine,
After these pains to rise to glorious fame.
Sailing with this thy comrade to Troy-town,
First thou shalt heal thee from thy grievous sore,
And then, being singled forth from all the host
As noblest, thou shalt conquer with that bow
Paris, prime author of these years of harm,
And capture Troy, and bear back to thy hall
The choicest guerdon, for thy valour's meed,
To Oeta's vale and thine own father's home.
But every prize thou tak'st be sure thou bear
Unto my pyre, in memory of my bow.
This word, Achilles' offspring, is for thee
No less. For, as thou could'st not without him,
So, without thee, he cannot conquer Troy.
Then, like twin lions hunting the same hill,
[1437-1471] Guard thou him, and he thee! and I will send
Asclepius Troyward to relieve thy pain.
For Ilion now a second time must fall
Before the Herculean bow. But, take good heed,
Midst all your spoil to hold the gods in awe.
For our great Father counteth piety
Far above all. This follows men in death,
And fails them not when they resign their breath.

PHI. Thou whom I have longed to see,
Thy dear voice is law to me.

NEO. I obey with gladdened heart.

HER. Lose no time: at once depart!
Bright occasion and fair wind
Urge your vessel from behind.

PHI. Come, let me bless the region ere I go.
Poor house, sad comrade of my watch, farewell!
Ye nymphs of meadows where soft waters flow
Thou ocean headland, pealing thy deep knell,
Where oft within my cavern as I lay
My hair was moist with dashing south-wind's spray,
And ofttimes came from Hermes' foreland high
Sad replication of my storm-vext cry;
Ye fountains and thou Lycian water sweet, —
I never thought to leave you, yet my feet
Are turning from your paths, — we part for aye.
Farewell! and waft me kindly on my way,
O Lemnian earth enclosed by circling seas,
To sail, where mighty Fate my course decrees,
And friendly voices point me, and the will
Of that heroic power, who doth this act fulfil.

CH. Come now all in one strong band;
Then, ere loosing from the land,
Pray we to the nymphs of sea
Kind protectresses to be,
Till we touch the Trojan strand.

ELECTRA

Translated by Lewis Campbell

Generally believed to have been written towards the end of Sophocles' career, *Electra* is set in the city of Argos a few years after the Trojan war. The tragedy concerns Electra and Orestes' vengeance on their mother Clytemnestra and Aegisthus for the murder of their father, Agamemnon. In the drama, Orestes arrives with his friend Pylades, son of Strophius, and a tutor. They have devised a plan where they will arrive in disguise, announcing that Orestes has died in a chariot accident and that they are delivering an urn with his remains.

Electra laments over her father, first on her own, then in lyrics with the newly-arrived chorus. She bitterly argues first with her sister Chrysothemis over her accommodation with her father's killers and then with her mother over her father's murder. Her only hope is that one day her brother will return to avenge him. When the messenger arrives with news of the death of Orestes, Clytemnestra is relieved to hear these tidings. Electra however is devastated. Chrysothemis then enters: she has seen some offerings at the tomb of Agamemnon and concludes that Orestes has returned. Electra dismisses her arguments, certain that Orestes is now dead. She suddenly turns to her sister with a proposal to kill Aegisthus, but Chrysothemis refuses to help, pointing out the impracticability of the plan.

After a choral ode Orestes arrives, carrying the urn supposedly containing his ashes. He does not recognise Electra, nor does she recognise her brother. He gives her the urn and she delivers a moving lament over it, unaware that her brother is in fact standing alive next to her. Now realising the truth, Orestes reveals his identity to his emotional sister. She is overjoyed that he is alive, but in their excitement they nearly reveal his identity, and the tutor comes out from the palace to urge them on. Orestes and Pylades enter the house and slay his mother Clytemnestra. As Aegisthus returns home, they quickly put her corpse under a sheet and present it to him as the body of Orestes. He lifts the veil to discover who it really is, and Orestes then reveals himself. They escort Aegisthus off set to be killed at the hearth, the same location Agamemnon was slain. The play ends here, before the death of Aegisthus is announced.

‘Electra and Orestes’ by Alfred Church

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‘Electra Receiving the Ashes of Her Brother Orestes’ by Jean Baptiste Joseph Wicar, 1826

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

An Old Man, formerly one of the retainers of Agamemnon.
ORESTES, son of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra.
ELECTRA, sister of Orestes.
CHORUS of Argive Women.
CHRYSOTHEMIS, sister of Orestes and Electra.
CLYTEMNESTRA.
AEGISTHUS.
PYLADES appears with ORESTES, but does not speak.

SCENE. Mycenae: before the palace of the Pelopidae.

ARGUMENT

Agamemnon on his return from Troy, had been murdered by his wife Clytemnestra and her paramour Aegisthus, who had usurped the Mycenean throne. Orestes, then a child, had been rescued by his sister Electra, and sent into Phocis with the one servant who remained faithful to his old master. The son of Agamemnon now returns, being of a full age, accompanied by this same attendant and his friend Pylades, with whom he has already concerted a plan for taking vengeance on his father’s murderers, in obedience to the command of Apollo.

Orestes had been received in Phocis by Strophius, his father’s friend. Another Phocian prince, named Phanoteus, was a friend of Aegisthus.

ELECTRA

ORESTES and the Old Man — PYLADES is present.

OLD MAN. Son of the king who led the Achaean host
Erewhile beleaguering Troy, ’tis thine to day
To see around thee what through many a year
Thy forward spirit hath sighed for. Argolis
Lies here before us, hallowed as the scene
Of Io’s wildering pain: yonder, the mart
Named from the wolf slaying God, and there, to our left,
Hera’s famed temple. For we reach the bourn
Of far renowned Mycenae, rich in gold
And Pelops’ fatal roofs before us rise,
Haunted with many horrors, whence my hand,
Thy murdered sire then lying in his gore,
Received thee from thy sister, and removed
Where I have kept thee safe and nourished thee
To this bright manhood thou dost bear, to be
The avenger of thy father’s bloody death.
Wherefore, Orestes, and thou, Pylades,
Dearest of friends, though from a foreign soil,
Prepare your enterprise with speed. Dark night
Is vanished with her stars, and day’s bright orb
Hath waked the birds of morn into full song.
Now, then, ere foot of man go forth, ye two
Knit counsels. ’Tis no time for shy delay:
The very moment for your act is come.

OR. Kind faithful friend, how well thou mak’st appear
Thy constancy in service to our house!
As some good steed, aged, but nobly bred,
Slacks not his spirit in the day of war,
But points his ears to the fray, even so dost thou
Press on and urge thy master in the van.
Hear, then, our purpose, and if aught thy mind,
[30-71] Keenly attent, discerns of weak or crude
In this I now set forth, admonish me.

I, when I visited the Pythian shrine
Oracular, that I might learn whereby
To punish home the murderers of my sire,
Had word from Phoebus which you straight shall hear:
‘No shielded host, but thine own craft, O King!
The righteous death-blow to thine arm shall bring.’
Then, since the will of Heaven is so revealed,
Go thou within, when Opportunity
Shall marshal thee the way, and gathering all
Their business, bring us certain cognizance.
Age and long absence are a safe disguise;
They never will suspect thee who thou art.
And let thy tale be that another land,
Phocis, hath sent thee forth, and Phanoteus,
Than whom they have no mightier help in war.
Then, prefaced with an oath, declare thy news,
Orestes’ death by dire mischance, down-rolled
From wheel-borne chariot in the Pythian course.
So let the fable be devised; while we,
As Phoebus ordered, with luxuriant locks
Shorn from our brows, and fair libations, crown
My father’s sepulchre, and thence return
Bearing aloft the shapely vase of bronze
That’s hidden hard by in brushwood, as thou knowest,
And bring them welcome tidings, that my form
Is fallen ere now to ashes in the fire.
How should this pain me, in pretence being dead,
Really to save myself and win renown?
No saying bodes men ill, that brings them gain.
Oft have I known the wise, dying in word,
Return with glorious salutation home.
So lightened by this rumour shall mine eye
Blaze yet like bale-star on mine enemies.
O native earth! and Gods that hold the land,
Accept me here, and prosper this my way!
Thou, too, paternal hearth! To thee I come,
Justly to cleanse thee by behest from heaven.
Send me not bootless, Gods, but let me found
[72-101] A wealthy line of fair posterity!

I have spoken. To thy charge! and with good heed
Perform it. We go forth. The Occasion calls,
Great taskmaster of enterprise to men.

ELECTRA (within). Woe for my hapless lot!

OLD M. Hark! from the doors, my son, methought there came
A moaning cry, as of some maid within.

OR. Can it be poor Electra? Shall we stay,
And list again the lamentable sound?

OLD M. Not so. Before all else begin the attempt
To execute Apollo's sovereign will,
Pouring libation to thy sire: this makes
Victory ours, and our success assured.[Exeunt

Enter ELECTRA.

MONODY.

EL. O purest light!
And air by earth alone
Measured and limitable, how oft have ye
Heard many a piercing moan,
Many a blow full on my bleeding breast,
When gloomy night
Hath slackened pace and yielded to the day!
And through the hours of rest,
Ah! well 'tis known
To my sad pillow in yon house of woe,
What vigil of scant joyance keeping,
Whiles all within are sleeping,
For my dear father without stint I groan,
Whom not in bloody fray
The War-god in the stranger-land
Received with hospitable hand,
But she that is my mother, and her groom,
As woodmen fell the oak,
Cleft through the skull with murdering stroke.
And o'er this gloom

No ray of pity, save from only me,
Goes forth on thee,
[101-136] My father, who didst die
A cruel death of piteous agony.
But ne’er will I
Cease from my crying and sad mourning lay,
While I behold the sky,
Glancing with myriad fires, or this fair day.
But, like some brood-bereavèd nightingale,
With far-heard wail,
Here at my father’s door my voice shall sound.
O home beneath the ground!
Hades unseen, and dread Persephonè,
And darkling Hermes, and the Curse revered,
And ye, Erinyës, of mortals feared,
Daughters of Heaven, that ever see
Who die unjustly, who are wronged i’ the bed
Of those they wed,
Avenge our father’s murder on his foe!
Aid us, and send my brother to my side;
Alone I cannot longer bide
The oppressive strain of strength-o’ermastering woe.

CHORUS (entering).

O sad Electra, childI 1 Of a lost mother, why still flow
Unceasingly with lamentation wild
For him who through her treachery beguiled,
Inveigled by a wife’s deceit,
Fallen at the foul adulterer’s feet,
Most impiously was quelled long years ago?
Perish the cause! if I may lawfully pray so.

EL. O daughters of a noble line,
Ye come to soothe me from my troublous woe.
I see, I know:
Your love is not unrecognized of mine.
But yet I will not seem as I forgot,
Or cease to mourn my hapless father’s lot.
Oh, of all love

That ever may you move,
This only boon I crave —
Leave me to rave!

CH. Lament, nor praying breathI 2 [137-172]
Will raise thy sire, our honoured chief,
From that dim multitudinous gulf of death.
Beyond the mark, due grief that measureth,
Still pining with excess of pain
Thou urgest lamentation vain,
That from thy woes can bring thee no relief.
Why hast thou set thy heart on unavailing grief?

EL. Senseless were he who lost from thought
A noble father, lamentably slain!
I love thy strain,
Bewildered mourner, bird divinely taught,
For ‘Itys,’ ‘Itys,’ ever heard to pine.
O Niobè, I hold thee all divine,
Of sorrows queen,
Who with all tearful mien
Insepulchred in stone
Aye makest moan.

CH. Not unto thee alone hath sorrow come,II 1
Daughter, that thou shouldst carry grief so far
Beyond those dwellers in the palace-home
Who of thy kindred are
And own one source with thee.
What life hath she,
Chrysothemis, and Iphianassa bright,
And he whose light
Is hidden afar from taste of horrid doom,
Youthful Orestes, who shall come
To fair Mycenae’s glorious town,
Welcomed as worthy of his sire’s renown,
Sped by great Zeus with kindly thought,
And to this land with happiest omen brought?

EL. Awaiting him I endlessly endure;
Unwed and childless still I go

Unwed and childless still I go,
With tears in constant flow,
Girt round with misery that finds no cure.
But he forgets his wrong and all my teaching.
What message have I sent beseeching,
But baffled flies back idly home?
Ever he longs, he saith, but, longing, will not come.

CH. Take heart, dear child! still mighty in the skyII 2 [173-208]
Is Zeus who ruleth all things and surveys.
Commit to him thy grief that surgeth high,
And walk in safer ways,
Let not hate vex thee sore,
Nor yet ignore
The cause of hate and sorrow in thy breast.
Time bringeth rest:
All is made easy through his power divine.
The heir of Agamemnon's line
Who dwells by Crisa's pastoral strand
Shall yet return unto his native land;
And he shall yet regard his own
Who reigns beneath upon his Stygian throne.

EL. Meanwhile my life falls from me in despair
Years pass and patience nought avails:
My heart within me fails:
Orphaned I pine without protecting care;
And like a sojourner all unregarded
At slave-like labour unrewarded
I toil within my father's hall
Thus meanly attired, and starved, a table-serving thrall.

CH. Sad was thy greeting when he reached the strand,III 1
Piteous thy crying where thy father lay
On that fell day
When the bronze edge with dire effect was driven.
By craft 'twas planned,
By frenzied lust the blow was given:
Mother and father of a monstrous birth,
Whether a God there wrought or mortal of the Earth.

EL. O day beyond all days that yet have rolled
Most hateful in thy course of light!
O horror of that night!
O hideous feast, abhorr'd, not to be told!
How could I bear it, when my father's eye
Saw death advancing from the ruthless pair,
Conjoint in cruel villany,
By whom my life was plunged in black despair?
[209-243] Oh, to the workers of such deeds as these
May great Olympus' Lord
Return of evil still afford,
Nor let them wear the gloss of sovran ease!

CH. Take thought to keep thy crying within bound.III 2
Doth not thy sense enlighten thee to see
How recklessly
Even now thou winnest undeservèd woe?
Still art thou found
To make thy misery overflow
Through self-bred gloomy strife. But not for long
Shall one alone prevail who strives against the strong.

EL. 'Twas dire oppression taught me my complaint
I know my rage a quenchless fire:
But nought, however dire,
Shall visit this my frenzy with restraint,
Or check my lamentation while I live.
Dear friends, kind women of true Argive breed,
Say, who can timely counsel give
Or word of comfort suited to my need?
Beyond all cure shall this my cause be known.
No counsels more! Ah leave,
Vain comforters, and let me grieve
With ceaseless pain, unmeasured in my moan.

CH. With kind intentIV
Full tenderly my words are meant;
Like a true mother pressing heart to heart,
I pray thee, do not aggravate thy smart.

EL. But have my miseries a measure? Tell.
Can it be well
To pour forgetfulness upon the dead?
Hath mortal head
Conceived a wickedness so bold?
O never may such brightness shine for me,
Nor let me peaceful be
With aught of good my life may still enfold,
If from wide echoing of my father's name
The wings of keen lament I must withhold.
[244-287] Sure holy shame
And pious care would vanish among men,
If he, mere earth and nothingness, must lie
In darkness, and his foes shall not again
Render him blood for blood in amplest penalty.

LEADER OF CH. Less from our own desires, my child, we came,
Than for thy sake. But, if we speak amiss,
Take thine own course. We still will side with thee.

EL. Full well I feel that too impatiently
I seem to multiply the sounds of woe.
Yet suffer me, dear women! Mighty force
Compels me. Who that had a noble heart
And saw her father's cause, as I have done,
By day and night more outraged, could refrain?
Are my woes lessening? Are they not in bloom? —
My mother full of hate and hateful proved,
Whilst I in my own home must dwell with these,
My father's murderers, and by them be ruled,
Dependent on their bounty even for bread.
And then what days suppose you I must pass,
When I behold Aegisthus on the throne
That was my father's; when I see him wear
Such robes, and pour libations by the hearth
Where he destroyed him; lastly, when I see
Their crowning insolence, — our regicide
Laid in my father's chamber beside her,
My mother — if she still must bear the name

When resting in those arms? Her shame is dead.
She harbours with blood-guiltiness, and fears
No vengeance, but, as laughing at the wrong,
She watches for the hour wherein with guile
She killed our sire, and orders dance and mirth
That day o' the month, and joyful sacrifice
Of thanksgiving. But I within the house
Beholding, weep and pine, and mourn that feast
Of infamy, called by my father's name,
All to myself; for not even grief may flow
As largely as my spirit would desire.
That so-called princess of a noble race
[288-327] O'ercrows my wailing with loud obloquy:
'Hilding! are you alone in grief? Are none
Mourning for loss of fathers but yourself?
'Fore the blest Gods! ill may you thrive, and ne'er
Find cure of sorrow from the powers below!'
So she insults: unless she hear one say
'Orestes will arrive': then standing close,
She shouts like one possessed into mine ear,
'These are your doings, this your work, I trow.
You stole Orestes from my gripe, and placed
His life with fosterers; but you shall pay
Full penalty.' So harsh is her exclaim.
And he at hand, the husband she extols,
Hounds on the cry, that prince of cowardice,
From head to foot one mass of pestilent harm.
Tongue-doughty champion of this women's-war.
I, for Orestes ever languishing
To end this, am undone. For evermore
Intending, still delaying, he wears out
All hope, both here and yonder. How, then, friends,
Can I be moderate, or feel the touch
Of holy resignation? Evil fruit
Cannot but follow on a life of ill.

CH. Say, is Aegisthus near while thus you speak?
Or hath he left the palace? We would know.

EL. Most surely. Never think, if he were by,

EL. Most surely. Never think, if he were by,
I could stray out of door. He is abroad.

CH. Then with less fear I may converse with thee.

EL. Ask what you will, for he is nowhere near.

CH. First of thy brother I beseech thee tell,
How deem’st thou? Will he come, or still delay?

EL. His promise comes, but still performance sleeps.

CH. Well may he pause who plans a dreadful deed.

EL. I paused not in his rescue from the sword.

CH. Fear not. He will bestead you. He is true.

EL. But for that faith my life had soon gone by.

CH. No more! I see approaching from the house
Thy sister by both parents of thy blood,
Chrysothemis; in her hand an offering,
Such as old custom yields to those below.

[328-363]

Enter CHRYSOTHEMIS.

CHRYSOTHEMIS. What converse keeps thee now beyond the gates,
Dear sister? why this talk in the open day?
Wilt thou not learn after so long to cease
From vain indulgence of a bootless rage?
I know in my own breast that I am pained
By what thou griev’st at, and if I had power,
My censure of their deeds would soon be known.
But in misfortune I have chosen to sail
With lowered canvas, rather than provoke
With puny strokes invulnerable foes.
I would thou didst the like: though I must own
The right is on thy side, and not on mine.
But if I mean to dwell at liberty,
I must obey in all the stronger will.

EL. ’Tis strange and pitiful, thy father’s child
Can leave him in oblivion and subserve
The mother. All thy schooling of me springs
From her suggestion, not of thine own wit.
Sure, either thou art senseless, or thy sense
Deserts thy friends. Treason or dulness then?
Choose! — You declared but now, if you had strength,
You would display your hatred of this pair.
Yet, when I plan full vengeance for my sire,
You aid me not, but turn me from the attempt.
What’s this but adding cowardice to evil?
For tell me, or be patient till I show,
What should I gain by ceasing this my moan?
I live to vex them: — though my life be poor,
Yet that suffices, for I honour him,
My father, — if affection touch the dead.
You say you hate them, but belie your word,
Consorting with our father’s murderers.
I then, were all the gifts in which you glory
Laid at my feet, will never more obey
This tyrant power. I leave you your rich board
And life of luxury. Ne’er be it mine to feed
On dainties that would poison my heart’s peace!
[364-402] I care not for such honour as thou hast.
Nor wouldst thou care if thou wert wise. But now,
Having the noblest of all men for sire,
Be called thy mother’s offspring; so shall most
Discern thine infamy and traitorous mind
To thy dead father and thy dearest kin.

CH. No anger, we entreat. Both have said well,
If each would learn of other, and so do.

CHR. For my part, women, use hath seasoned me
To her discourse. Nor had I spoken of this,
Had I not heard a horror coming on
That will restrain her from her endless moan.

EL. Come speak it forth, this terror! I will yield,
If thou canst tell me worse than I endure.

CHR. I'll tell thee all I know. If thou persist
In these thy wailings, they will send thee far
From thine own land, and close thee from the day,
Where in a rock-hewn chamber thou may'st chant
Thine evil orisons in darkness drear.
Think of it, while there 's leisure to reflect;
Or if thou suffer, henceforth blame me not.

EL. And have they so determined on my life?

CHR. 'Tis certain; when Aegisthus comes again.

EL. If that be all, let him return with speed!

CHR. Unhappy! why this curse upon thyself?

EL. If this be their intent, why, let him come!

CHR. To work such harm on thee! What thought is this!

EL. Far from mine eye to banish all your brood.

CHR. Art not more tender of the life thou hast?

EL. Fair, to a marvel, is my life, I trow!

CHR. It would be, couldst thou be advised for good.

EL. Never advise me to forsake my kin.

CHR. I do not: only to give place to power.

EL. Thine be such flattery. 'Tis not my way.

CHR. Sure, to be wrecked by rashness is not well.

EL. Let me be wrecked in 'venging my own sire.

CHR. I trust his pardon for my helplessness.

EL. Such talk hath commendation from the vile.

CHR. Wilt thou not listen? Wilt thou ne'er be ruled?

[403-432] EL. No; not by thee! Let me not sink so low.

CHR. Then I will hie me on mine errand straight.

EL. Stay; whither art bound? For whom to spend those gifts?

CHR. Sent by my mother to my father's tomb
To pour libations to him.

EL. How? To him?
Most hostile to her of all souls that are?

CHR. Who perished by her hand — so thou wouldst say.

EL. What friend hath moved her? Who hath cared for this?

CHR. Methinks 'twas some dread vision, seen by night.

EL. Gods of my father, O be with me now!

CHR. What? art thou hopeful from the fear I spake of?

EL. Tell me the dream, and I will answer thee.

CHR. I know but little of it.

EL. Speak but that.
A little word hath ofttimes been the cause
Of ruin or salvation unto men.

CHR. 'Tis said she saw our father's spirit come
Once more to visit the abodes of light;
Then take and firmly plant upon the hearth
The sceptre which he bore of old, and now
Aegisthus bears: and out of this upsprang
A burgeoned shoot, that shadowed all the ground
Of loved Mycenae. So I heard the tale
Told by a maid who listened when the Queen
Made known her vision to the God of Day.
But more than this I know not, save that I
Am sent by her through terror of the dream.
And I beseech thee by the Gods we serve
To take my counsel and not rashly fall.

If thou repel me now, the time may come
When suffering shall have brought thee to my side.

EL. Now, dear Chrysothemis, of what thou bearest
Let nothing touch his tomb. ’Tis impious
[433-469] And criminal to offer to thy sire
Rites and libations from a hateful wife.
Then cast them to the winds, or deep in dust
Conceal them, where no particle may reach
His resting-place: but lie in store for her
When she goes underground. Sure, were she not
Most hardened of all women that have been,
She ne’er had sent those loveless offerings
To grace the sepulchre of him she slew.
For think how likely is the buried king
To take such present kindly from her hand,
Who slew him like an alien enemy,
Dishonoured even in death, and mangled him,
And wiped the death-stain with his flowing locks —
Sinful purgation! Think you that you bear
In those cold gifts atonement for her guilt?
It is not possible. Wherefore let be.
But take a ringlet from thy comely head,
And this from mine, that lingers on my brow
Longing to shade his tomb. Ah, give it to him,
All I can give, and this my maiden-zone,
Not daintily adorned, as once erewhile.
Then, humbly kneeling, pray that from the ground
He would arise to help us ‘gainst his foes,
And grant his son Orestes with high hand
Strongly to trample on his enemies;
That in our time to come from ampler stores
We may endow him, than are ours to-day.
I cannot but imagine that his will
Hath part in visiting her sleep with fears.
But howsoe’er, I pray thee, sister mine,
Do me this service, and thyself, and him,
Dearest of all the world to me and thee,
The father of us both, who rests below.

CH. She counsels piously; and thou, dear maid,
If thou art wise, wilt do her bidding here.

CHR. Yea, when a thing is right, it is not well
Idly to wrangle, but to act with speed.
Only, dear friends, in this mine enterprise,
Let me have silence from your lips, I pray;
[470-507] For should my mother know of it, sharp pain
Will follow yet my bold adventurous feat.[Exit CHRYSOTHEMIS

CHORUS.

An erring seer am I,I 1
Of sense and wisdom lorn,
If this prophetic Power of right,
O'ertaking the offender, come not nigh
Ere many an hour be born.
Yon vision of the night,
That lately breathed into my listening ear,
Hath freed me, O my daughter, from all fear.
Sweet was that bodement. He doth not forget,
The Achaean lord that gave thee being, nor yet
The bronzen-griding axe, edged like a spear,
Hungry and keen, though dark with stains of time,
That in the hour of hideous crime
Quelled him with cruel butchery:
That, too, remembers, and shall testify.

From ambush deep and dreadI 2
With power of many a hand
And many hastening feet shall spring
The Fury of the adamantine tread,
Visiting Argive land
Swift recompense to bring
For eager dalliance of a blood-stained pair
Unhallowed, foul, forbidden. No omen fair, —
Their impious course hath fixed this in my soul, —
Nought but black portents full of blame shall roll
Before their eyes that wrought or aided there.
Small force of divination would there seem

In prophecy or solemn dream,
Should not this vision of the night
Reach harbour in reality aright.

O chariot-course of Pelops, full of toil!II
How wearisome and sore
Hath been thine issue to our native soil! —
[508-545] Since, from the golden oar
Hurled to the deep afar,
Myrtilus sank and slept,
Cruelly plucked from that fell chariot-floor,
This house unceasingly hath kept
Crime and misfortune mounting evermore.

Enter CLYTEMNESTRA.

CLYTEMNESTRA. Again you are let loose and range at will.
Ay, for Aegisthus is not here, who barred
Your rashness from defaming your own kin
Beyond the gates. But now he's gone from home,
You heed not me: though you have noised abroad
That I am bold in crime, and domineer
Outrageously, oppressing thee and thine.
I am no oppressor, but I speak thee ill,
For thou art ever speaking ill of me —
Still holding forth thy father's death, that I
Have done it. So I did: I know it well:
That I deny not; for not I alone
But Justice slew him; and if you had sense,
To side with Justice ought to be your part.
For who but he of all the Greeks, your sire,
For whom you whine and cry, who else but he
Took heart to sacrifice unto the Gods
Thy sister? — having less of pain, I trow,
In getting her, than I, that bore her, knew!
Come, let me question thee! On whose behalf
Slew he my child? Was 't for the Argive host?
What right had they to traffic in my flesh? —
Menelaüs was his brother. Wilt thou say
He slew my daughter for his brother's sake?

How then should he escape me? Had not he,
Menelaüs, children twain, begotten of her
Whom to reclaim that army sailed to Troy?
Was Death then so enamoured of my seed,
That he must feast thereon and let theirs live?
Or was the God-abandoned father's heart
Tender toward them and cruel to my child?
[546-581] Doth this not argue an insensate sire?
I think so, though your wisdom may demur.
And could my lost one speak, she would confirm it.
For my part, I can dwell on what I have done
Without regret. You, if you think me wrong,
Bring reasons forth and blame me to my face!

EL. Thou canst not say this time that I began
And brought this on me by some taunting word.
But, so you'd suffer me, I would declare
The right both for my sister and my sire.

CLY. Thou hast my sufferance. Nor would hearing vex,
If ever thus you tuned your speech to me.

EL. Then I will speak. You say you slew him. Where
Could there be found confession more depraved,
Even though the cause were righteous? But I'll prove
No rightful vengeance drew thee to the deed,
But the vile bands of him you dwell with now.
Or ask the huntress Artemis, what sin
She punished, when she tied up all the winds
Round Aulis. — I will tell thee, for her voice
Thou ne'er may'st hear! 'Tis rumoured that my sire,
Sporting within the goddess' holy ground,
His foot disturbed a dappled hart, whose death
Drew from his lips some rash and boastful word.
Wherefore Latona's daughter in fell wrath
Stayed the army, that in quittance for the deer
My sire should slay at the altar his own child.
So came her sacrifice. The Achaean fleet
Had else no hope of being launched to Troy
Nor to their homes. Wherefore, with much constraint

And painful urging of his backward will,
Hardly he yielded; — not for his brother's sake.
But grant thy speech were sooth, and all were done
In aid of Menelaüs; for this cause
Hadst thou the right to slay him? What high law
Ordaining? Look to it, in establishing
Such precedent thou dost not lay in store
Repentance for thyself. For if by right
[581-620] One die for one, thou first wilt be destroyed
If Justice find thee. — But again observe
The hollowness of thy pretended plea.
Tell me, I pray, what cause thou dost uphold
In doing now the basest deed of all,
Chambered with the blood-guilty, with whose aid
Thou slewest our father in that day. For him
You now bear children — ousting from their right
The stainless offspring of a holy sire.
How should this plead for pardon? Wilt thou say
Thus thou dost 'venge thy daughter's injury?
O shameful plea? Where is the thought of honour,
If foes are married for a daughter's sake? —
Enough. No words can move thee. Thy rash tongue
With checkless clamour cries that we revile
Our mother. Nay, no mother, but the chief
Of tyrants to us! For my life is full
Of weariness and misery from thee
And from thy paramour. While he abroad,
Orestes, our one brother, who escaped
Hardly from thy attempt, unhappy boy!
Wears out his life, victim of cross mischance.
Oft hast thou taunted me with fostering him
To be thy punisher. And this, be sure,
Had I but strength, I had done. Now for this word,
Proclaim me what thou wilt, — evil in soul,
Or loud in cursing, or devoid of shame:
For if I am infected with such guilt,
Methinks my nature is not fallen from thine.

CH. (looking at CLYTEMNESTRA).
I see her fuming with fresh wrath: the thought

I see her fuming with fresh wrath: the thought
Of justice enters not her bosom now.

CLY. What thought of justice should be mine for her,
Who at her age can so insult a mother?
Will shame withhold her from the wildest deed?

EL. Not unashamed, assure thee, I stand here,
Little as thou mayest deem it. Well I feel
My acts untimely and my words unmeet.
But your hostility and treatment force me
[620-656] Against my disposition to this course.
Harsh ways are taught by harshness.

CLY. Brazen thing!
Too true it is that words and deeds of mine
Are evermore informing thy harsh tongue.

EL. The shame is yours, because the deeds are yours.
My words are but their issue and effect.

CLY. By sovereign Artemis, whom still I serve,
You'll rue this boldness when Aegisthus comes.

EL. See now, your anger bears you off, and ne'er
Will let you listen, though you gave me leave.

CLY. Must I not even sacrifice in peace
From your harsh clamour, when you've had your say?

EL. I have done. I check thee not. Go, sacrifice!
Accuse not me of hindering piety.

CLY. (to an attendant).
Then lift for me those fruitful offerings,
While to Apollo, before whom we stand,
I raise my supplication for release
From doubts and fears that shake my bosom now.
And, O defender of our house! attend
My secret utterance. No friendly ear
Is that which hearkens for my voice. My thought
Must not be blazoned with her standing by,

Lest through her envious and wide-babbling tongue
She fill the city full of wild surmise.
List, then, as I shall speak: and grant the dreams
Whose twofold apparition I to-night
Have seen, if good their bodement, be fulfilled:
If hostile, turn their influence on my foes.
And yield not them their wish that would by guile
Thrust me from this high fortune, but vouchsafe
That ever thus exempt from harms I rule
The Atridae's home and kingdom, in full life,
Partaking with the friends I live with now
All fair prosperity, and with my children,
Save those who hate and vex me bitterly.
Lykeian Phoebus, favourably hear
My prayer, and grant to all of us our need!
[657-689] More is there, which, though I be silent here,
A God should understand. No secret thing
Is hidden from the all-seeing sons of Heaven.

Enter the Old Man.

OLD M. Kind dames and damsels, may I clearly know
If these be King Aegisthus' palace-halls?

CH. They are, sir; you yourself have guessed aright.

OLD M. May I guess further that in yonder dame
I see his queen? She looks right royally.

CH. 'Tis she, — no other, — whom your eyes behold.

OLD M. Princess, all hail! To thee and to thy spouse
I come with words of gladness from a friend.

CLY. That auspice I accept. But I would first
Learn from thee who of men hath sent thee forth?

OLD M. Phanoteus the Phocian, with a charge of weight.

CLY. Declare it, stranger. Coming from a friend,
Thou bring'st us friendly tidings, I feel sure.

OLD M. Orestes' death. Ye have the sum in brief.

EL. Ah me! undone! This day hath ruined me.

CLY. What? Let me hear again. Regard her not.

OLD M. Again I say it, Orestes is no more.

EL. Undone! undone! Farewell to life and hope!

CLY. (to ELECTRA).
See thou to thine own case! (To Old Man) Now, stranger, tell me
In true discourse the manner of his death.

OLD M. For that I am here, and I will tell the whole.
He, entering on the great arena famed
As Hellas' pride, to win a Delphian prize,
On hearing the loud summons of the man
Calling the foot-race, which hath trial first,
Came forward, a bright form, admired by all.
And when his prowess in the course fulfilled
The promise of his form, he issued forth
Dowered with the splendid meed of victory. —
To tell a few out of the many feats
Of such a hero were beyond my power.
[690-727] Know then, in brief, that of the prizes set
For every customary course proclaimed
By order of the judges, the whole sum
Victoriously he gathered, happy deemed
By all; declared an Argive, and his name
Orestes, son of him who levied once
The mighty armament of Greeks for Troy.
So fared he then: but when a God inclines
To hinder happiness, not even the strong
Are scatheless. So, another day, when came
At sunrise the swift race of charioteers,
He entered there with many a rival car: —
One from Achaia, one from Sparta, two
Libyan commanders of the chariot-yoke;
And he among them fifth, with steeds of price

From Thessaly; — the sixth Aetolia sent
With chestnut mares; the seventh a Magnete man;
The eighth with milk-white colts from Oeta's vale;
The ninth from god-built Athens; and the tenth
Boeotia gave to make the number full.
Then stood they where the judges of the course
Had posted them by lot, each with his team;
And sprang forth at the brazen trumpet's blare.
Shouting together to their steeds, they shook
The reins, and all the course was filled with noise
Of rattling chariots, and the dust arose
To heaven. Now all in a confusèd throng
Spared not the goad, each eager to outgo
The crowded axles and the snorting steeds;
For close about his nimbly circling wheels
And stooping sides fell flakes of panted foam.
Orestes, ever nearest at the turn,
With whirling axle seemed to graze the stone,
And loosing with free rein the right-hand steed
That pulled the side-rope, held the near one in.
So for a time all chariots upright moved,
But soon the Oetaean's hard-mouthed horses broke
From all control, and wheeling as they passed
From the sixth circuit to begin the seventh,
Smote front to front against the Barcan car.
[728-766] And when that one disaster had befallen,
Each dashed against his neighbour and was thrown,
Till the whole plain was strewn with chariot-wreck.
Then the Athenian, skilled to ply the rein,
Drew on one side, and heaving to, let pass
The rider-crested surge that rolled i' the midst.
Meanwhile Orestes, trusting to the end,
Was driving hindmost with tight rein; but now,
Seeing him left the sole competitor,
Hurling fierce clamour through his steeds, pursued:
So drave they yoke by yoke — now this, now that
Pulling ahead with car and team. Orestes,
Ill-fated one, each previous course had driven
Safely without a check, but after this,

In letting loose again the left-hand rein,
He struck the edge of the stone before he knew,
Shattering the axle's end, and tumbled prone,
Caught in the reins, that dragged him with sharp thongs.
Then as he fell to the earth the horses swerved,
And roamed the field. The people when they saw
Him fallen from out the car, lamented loud
For the fair youth, who had achieved before them
Such glorious feats, and now had found such woe, —
Dashed on the ground, then tossed with legs aloft
Against the sky, — until the charioteers,
Hardly restraining the impetuous team,
Released him, covered so with blood that none, —
No friend who saw — had known his hapless form.
Which then we duly burned upon the pyre.
And straightway men appointed to the task
From all the Phocians bear his mighty frame —
Poor ashes! narrowed in a brazen urn, —
That he may find in his own fatherland
His share of sepulture. — Such our report,
Painful to hear, but unto us, who saw,
The mightiest horror that e'er met mine eye.

CH. Alas! the stock of our old masters, then,
Is utterly uprooted and destroyed.

CLY. O heavens! what shall I say? That this is well?
[767-799] Or terrible, but gainful? Hard my lot,
To save my life through my calamity!

OLD M. Lady, why hath my speech disheartened thee?

CLY. To be a mother hath a marvellous power:
No injury can make one hate one's child.

OLD M. Then it should seem our coming was in vain.

CLY. In vain? Nay, verily; thou, that hast brought
Clear evidences of his fate, who, sprung
Prom my life's essence, severed from my breast
And nurture, was estranged in banishment,

And never saw me from the day he went
Out from this land, but for his father's blood
Threatened me still with accusation dire;
That sleep nor soothed at night nor sweetly stole
My senses from the day, but, all my time,
Each instant led me on the way to death! —
But this day's chance hath freed me from all fear
Of him, and of this maid: who being at home
Troubled me more, and with unmeasured thirst
Kept draining my life-blood; but now her threats
Will leave us quiet days, methinks, and peace
Unbroken. — How then shouldst thou come in vain?

EL. O misery! 'Tis time to wail thy fate,
Orestes, when, in thy calamity,
Thy mother thus insults thee. Is it well?

CLY. 'Tis well that he is gone, not that you live.

EL. Hear, 'venging spirits of the lately dead!

CLY. The avenging spirits have heard and answered well.

EL. Insult us now, for thou art fortunate!

CLY. You and Orestes are to quench my pride.

EL. Our pride is quenched. No hope of quenching thee!

CLY. A world of good is in thy coming, stranger,
Since thou hast silenced this all-clamorous tongue.

OLD M. Then I may go my way, seeing all is well.

[800-836] CLY. Nay, go not yet! That would disgrace alike
Me and the friend who sent you to our land.
But come thou in, and leave her out of door
To wail her own and loved ones' overthrow.
[Exeunt CLYTEMNESTRA and Old Man

EL. Think you the wretch in heartfelt agony
Weeps inconsolably her perished son?
She left us with a laugh! O misery!

She left us with a laugh! O misery!
How thou hast ruined me, dear brother mine,
By dying! Thou hast torn from out my heart
The only hope I cherished yet, that thou
Living wouldst come hereafter to avenge
Thy father's woes and mine. Where must I go?
Since I am left of thee and of my sire
Bereaved and lonely, and once more must be
The drudge and menial of my bitterest foes,
My father's murderers. Say, is it well?
Nay, nevermore will I consort with these,
But sinking here before the palace gate,
Thus, friendless, I will wither out my life.
Hereat if any in the house be vexed,
Let them destroy me; for to take my life
Were kindness, and to live is only pain:
Life hath not kindled my desires with joy.

CH. 1. O ever-blazing sun!I 1
O lightning of the eternal Sire!
Can ye behold this done
And tamely hide your all-avenging fire?

EL. Ah me!

CH. 2. My daughter, why these tears?

EL. Woe!

CH. 3. Weep not, calm thy fears.

EL. You kill me.

CH. 4. How?

EL. To breathe
A hope for one beneath
So clearly sunk in death,
'Tis to afflict me more
Already pining sore.

CH. 5. One in a woman's toilsI 2 [837-870]

Was tangled, buried by her glittering coils,
Who now beneath —

EL. Ah woe!

CH. 6. Rules with a spirit unimpaired and strong.

EL. O dreadful!

CH. 7. Dreadful was the wrong.

EL. But she was quelled.

CH. 8. Ay.

EL. True!
That faithful mourner knew
A brother's aid. But I
Have no man now. The one
I had, is gone, is gone.
Rapt into nothingness.

CH. 9. Thou art wrung with sore distress.II 1

EL. I know it. Too well I know,
Taught by a life of woe,
Where horror dwells without relief.

CH. 10. Our eyes have seen thy grief.

EL. Then comfort not again —

CH. 11. Whither now turns thy strain?

EL. One utterly bereft,
Seeing no hope is left,
Of help from hands owning the same great sire.

CH. 12. 'Tis nature's debt.II 2

EL. To expire
On sharp-cut dragging thongs,
'Midst wildly trampling throngs
Of swiftly racing hoofs, like him

Of swiftly facing feets, like him,
Poor hapless one?

CH. 13. Vast, dim,
And boundless was the harm.

EL. Yea, severed from mine arm,
By strangers kept —

CH. 14. O pain!

EL. Hidden he must remain,
Of me unsepulchred, unmourned, unwept.

[871-906]

Enter CHRYSOTHEMIS.

CHR. Driven by delight, dear sister, I am come,
Reckless of dignity, with headlong speed.
For news I bear of joy and sweet relief
From ills that drew from thee thy ceaseless moan.

EL. Whence couldst thou hear of succour for my woes,
That close in darkness without hope of dawn?

CHR. Here is Orestes, learn it from my mouth,
As certainly as you now look on me.

EL. What? Art thou mad, unhappy one, to laugh
Over thine own calamity and mine?

CHR. No, by our father's hearth, I say not this
In mockery. I tell you he is come.

EL. Me miserable! Who hath given thine ear
The word that so hath wrought on thy belief?

CHR. Myself am the eyewitness, no one else
Gained my belief, but proofs I clearly saw.

EL. What sign hath so engrossed thine eye, poor girl?
What sight hath fired thee with this quenchless glow?

CHR. But list to me, I pray thee, that hereafterth

CHR. But list to me, I pray thee, that henceforth
Thou mayest account me clear eyed, or a fool!

EL. By all means, if it pleasure thee, say on.

CHR. Well, I will tell thee all I saw: — I came
Unto the ancient tomb that holds our sire;
And from the topmost mound I marked a stream
Of milk fresh-flowing, and his resting place
Ringed round with garlands of all flowers that blow.
I marvelled at the sight, and peered about,
Lest some one might be nearer than we knew.
But finding all was quiet in the spot,
I ventured closer to the tomb, and there,
Hard by the limit, I beheld a curl
Of hair new shorn, with all the gloss of youth
And straight it struck my heart, as with a sense
Of something seen, ah me! long, long ago,
And told me that my sight encountered here
The token of Orestes, dearest soul
Then, clasping it, I did not cry aloud,
But straight mine eyes were filled with tears of joy.
[907-943] And now as much as then I feel assured
He and none else bestowed this ornament.
To whom beyond thyself and me belongs
Such consecration? And I know this well,
I did it not, — nor thou. Impossible!
Thou canst not worship even the blessèd Gods
Forth of this roof, unpunished. And, most sure,
Our mother is not minded so to act,
Nor, had she done it, could we fail to know.
This offering comes then of Orestes' hand.
Take courage, dear one. Not one fate pursues
One house perpetually, but changeth still.
Ours was a sullen Genius, but perchance
This day begins the assurance of much good.

EL. Oh how I pity thine infatuate mind!

CHR. Why? Dost thou find no comfort in my news?

EL. You know not where you roam. Far wide! far wide!

CHR. Not know? when I have seen it with mine eyes?

EL. Dear, he is dead. Look not to him, poor girl!
Salvation comes to thee no more from him.

CHR. Oh me, unfortunate! Who told thee this?

EL. He who stood by and saw his life destroyed.

CHR. Amazement seizes me. Where is that man?

EL. Right welcome to the mother there within.

CHR. Me miserable! Who then can have decked
With all those ceremonies our father's tomb?

EL. I cannot but suppose some hand hath brought
These gifts in memory of Orestes dead.

CHR. O cruel fate! While I in ecstasy
Sped with such news, all ignorant, it seems,
Of our dire fortune; and, arriving, find
Fresh sorrows added to the former woe.

EL. It is so, sister; yet if thou wilt list
To me, thou mayest disperse this heaviness.

CHR. What? Shall I raise the dead again to life?

EL. I did not mean so. I am not so fond.

CHR. What bid you then that I have power to do?

EL. To endure courageously what I enjoin.

[944-981] CHR. So it make profit, I will not refuse.

EL. Remember, without toil no plan may thrive!

CHR. I know it, and will aid thee to my power.

EL. Then hearken my resolve. Thou seëst now,

We have no friendly succour in the world;
But death has taken all, and we are left
Two only. I, so long as I could hear
My brother lived and flourished, still had hope
He would arise to wreak his father's blood.
But now that he is gone, to thee I turn,
To help thy sister boldly to destroy
The guilty author of our father's death,
Aegisthus. — Wherefore hide it from thee now?
— Yea, sister! Till what term wilt thou remain
Inactive? To what end? What hope is yet
Left standing? Surely thou hast cause to grieve,
Bobbed of thy father's opulent heritage,
And feeling bitterly the creeping years
That find thee still a virgin and unwed.
Nay, nor imagine thou shalt ever know
That blessing. Not so careless of his life
Is King Aegisthus, as to risk the birth
Of sons from us, to his most certain fall.
But if thou wilt but follow my resolve,
First thou shalt win renown of piety
From our dead father, and our brother too,
Who rest beneath the ground, and shalt be free
For evermore in station as in birth,
And nobly matched in marriage, for the good
Draw gazers to them still. Then seest thou not
What meed of honour, if thou dost my will,
Thou shalt apportion to thyself and me?
For who, beholding us, what citizen,
What foreigner, will not extend the hand
Of admiration, and exclaim, 'See, friends,
These scions of one stock, these noble twain,
These that have saved their father's house from woe,
Who once when foes were mighty, set their life
Upon a cast, and stood forth to avenge
The stain of blood! Who will not love the pair
[981-1018] And do them reverence? Who will not give
Honour at festivals, and in the throng
Of popular resort, to these in chief,

For their high courage and their bold emprise?’
Such fame will follow us in all the world.
Living or dying, still to be renowned.
Ah, then, comply, dear sister; give thy sire
This toil — this labour to thy brother give;
End these my sufferings, end thine own regret:
The well-born cannot bear to live in shame.

CH. In such affairs, for those who speak and hear
Wise thoughtfulness is still the best ally.

CHR. True, noble women, and before she spake
Sound thought should have prevented the rash talk
That now hath proved her reckless. What wild aim
Beckons thee forth in arming this design
Whereto thou wouldst demand my ministry?
Dost not perceive, thou art not man but woman,
Of strength inferior to thine enemies, —
Their Genius daily prospering more and more,
Whilst ours is dwindling into nothingness?
Who then that plots against a life so strong
Shall quit him of the danger without harm?
Take heed we do not add to our distress
Should some one hear of this our colloquy.
Small help and poor advantage ‘twere for us
To win brief praise and then inglorious die.
Nay, death is not so hateful as when one
Desiring death is balked of that desire.
And I beseech thee, ere in utter ruin
We perish and make desolate our race,
Refrain thy rage. And I will guard for thee
In silence these thy words unrealized;
If thou wilt learn this wisdom from long time,
Having no strength, to bend before the strong.

CH. Comply. Than prudence and a heedful mind,
No fairer treasure can be found for men.

EL. Thy words have not surprised me. Well I knew
The good I offered would come back with scorn.

[1019-1052] I, all alone and with a single hand,
Must do this. For it shall not rest undone.

CHR. Would thou hadst been thus minded when our sire
Lay dying! In one act thou hadst compassed all.

EL. My spirit was the same: my mind was less.

CHR. Be such the life-long temper of thy mind!

EL. Thine admonition augurs little aid.

CHR. Yea. For the attempt would bring me certain bane.

EL. I envy thee thy prudence, hate thy fear.

CHR. Even when thou speak’st me fair, I will endure it.

EL. Take heart. That never will be thine from me.

CHR. Long time remains to settle that account.

EL. I find no profit in thee. Go thy way.

CHR. Profit there is, hadst thou a mind to learn.

EL. Go to thy mother and declare all this!

CHR. I am not so in hatred of thy life.

EL. Yet know the shame thou wouldst prepare for me.

CHR. No, no! Not shame, but care for thine estate.

EL. Must I still follow as thou thinkest good?

CHR. When thou hast wisdom, thou shalt be the guide.

EL. ’Tis hard when error wears the garb of sense.

CHR. Right. That is the misfortune of your case.

EL. Why? Feel you not the justice of my speech?

CHR. Justice may chance to bring me injury.

EL. I care not, I, to live by such a rule.

CHR. Well, if you do it, you will find me wise.

EL. Well, I will do it, nought dismayed by thee.

CHR. Speak you plain sooth? and will you not be counselled?

EL. No, for bad counsel is of all most hateful.

CHR. You take the sense of nothing that I say.

EL. Long since, not newly, my resolve is firm.

CHR. Then I will go. Thy heart will ne'er be brought
To praise my words, nor I thine action here.

EL. Then go within! I will not follow thee,
[1053-1089] Though thou desire it vehemently. None
Would be so fond to hunt on a cold trail.

CHR. If this seem wisdom to thee, then be wise
Thy way: but in the hour of misery,
When it hath caught thee, thou wilt praise my words. [Exit CHRYSOTHEMIS

CHORUS.

Wise are the birds of airI 1
That with true filial care
For those provide convenient food
Who gave them birth, who wrought their good.
Why will not men the like perfection prove?
Else, by the fires above,
And heavenly Rectitude,
Fierce recompense they shall not long elude.
O darkling rumour, world-o'er-wandering voice
That piercest to the shades beneath the ground,
To dead Atrides waft a sound
Of sad reproach, not bidding him rejoice.

Stained is the ancestral hall,I 2
Broken the battle-call,
That heretofore his children twain

In loving concord did sustain.
Alone, deserted, vexed, Electra sails,
Storm-tossed with rugged gales,
Lamenting evermore
Like piteous Philomel, and pining sore
For her lost father; — might she but bring down
That twofold Fury, caring not for death,
But ready to resign her breath,
What maid so worthy of a sire's renown?

None who inherit from a noble race,II 1
Complying with things base
Will let their ancient glory be defiled.
So 'twas thy choice, dear child,
Through homeless misery to win a twofold prize,
Purging the sin and shame
That cloud the Argive name,
So to be called most noble and most wise.

May'st thou surpass thy foes in wealth and powerII 2 [1090-1123]
As o'er thee now they tower!
Since I have found thee, not in bright estate,
Nor blessed by wayward fate,
But through thy loyalty to Heaven's eternal cause
Wearing the stainless crown
Of perfectest renown,
And richly dowered by the mightiest laws.

Enter ORESTES and PYLADES, with the urn.

OR. Say, dames and damsels, have we heard aright,
And speed we to the goal of our desire?

CH. And what desire or quest hath brought thee hither?

OR. I seek Aegisthus' dwelling all this while.

CH. Welcome. The tongue that told thee hath no blame.

OR. Which of you all will signify within
Our joint arrival, — not unwelcome here.

CH. This maiden, if the nearest should report.

OR. Mistress, wilt thou go yonder and make known,
That certain Phocians on Aegisthus wait?

EL. Oh! can it be that you are come to bring
Clear proofs of the sad rumour we have heard?

OR. I know not what ye have heard. Old Strophius
Charged me with tidings of Orestes' fate.

EL. What, stranger? How this terror steals on me!

OR. Bearing scant remnants of his body dead
In this small vase thou seest, we bring them home.

EL. O sorrow! thou art here: I see full well
That burden of my heart in present view.

OR. If thou hast tears for aught Orestes suffered,
Know that he lies within this vessel's room.

EL. Ah, sir! by all in Heaven, if yonder urn
Hide him, ah! give it once into my hand,
That o'er that dust I may lament and mourn
Myself and mine own house and all our woe!

OR. Bring it and give her, whosoe'er she be.
[1124-1163] For not an enemy — this petition shows it —
But of his friends or kindred, is this maid.
[The urn is given into ELECTRA'S hands

EL. O monument of him whom o'er all else
I loved! sole relic of Orestes' life,
How cold in this thy welcome is the hope
Wherein I decked thee as I sent thee forth!
Then bright was thy departure, whom I now
Bear lightly, a mere nothing, in my hands.
Would I had gone from life, ere I dispatched
Thee from my arms that saved thee to a land
Of strangers, stealing thee from death! For then
Thou hadst been quiet on that far off day,

And had thy portion in our father's tomb
Now thou hast perished in the stranger land
Far from thy sister, lorn and comfortless
And I, O wretchedness! neither have bathed
And laid thee forth, nor from the blazing fire
Collected the sad burden, as was meet
But thou, when foreign hands have tended thee
Com'st a small handful in a narrow shell
Woe for the constant care I spent on thee
Of old all vainly, with sweet toil! For never
Wast thou thy mother's darling, nay, but mine,
And I of all the household most thy nurse,
While 'sister, sister,' was thy voice to me
But now all this is vanished in one day,
Dying in thy death. Thou hast carried all away
As with a whirlwind, and art gone. No more
My father lives, thyself art lost in death,
I am dead, who lived in thee. Our enemies
Laugh loudly, and she maddens in her joy,
Our mother most unmotherly, of whom
Thy secret missives ofttimes told me, thou
Wouldst be the punisher. But that fair hope
The hapless Genius of thy lot and mine
Hath reft away, and gives thee thus to me, —
For thy loved form thy dust and fruitless shade
O bitterness! O piteous sight! Woe! woe!
Oh! sent on thy dire journey, dearest one,
[1164-1197] How thou hast ruined me! Thou hast indeed,
Dear brother! Then receive me to thyself,
Hide me in this thy covering, there to dwell,
Me who am nothing, with thy nothingness,
For ever! Yea, when thou wert here above,
I ever shared with thee in all, and now
I would not have thee shut me from thy tomb.
Oh! let me die and follow thee! the dead,
My mind assures me now, have no more pain.

CH. Electra, think! Thou hadst a mortal sire,
And mortal was thy brother. Grieve not far.

OR. O me! What shall I speak, or which way turn
The desperate word? I cannot hold my tongue.

EL. What pain o’ercomes thee? Wherefore speak’st thou so?

OR. Can this be famed Electra I behold?

EL. No other. In sad case, as you may see

OR. Ah! deep indeed was this calamity!

EL. Is’t possible that thou shouldst grieve for me?

OR. O ruined form! abandoned to disgrace!

EL. ’Tis me you mean, stranger, I feel it now.

OR. Woe ‘s me! Untrimmed for bridal, hapless maid!

EL. Why this fixed gaze, O stranger! that deep groan?

OR. How all unknowing was I of mine ill!

EL. What thing hath passed to make it known to thee?

OR. The sight of thee attired with boundless woe.

EL. And yet thine eye sees little of my pain.

OR. Can aught be still more hateful to be seen?

EL. I have my dwelling with the murderers —

OR. Of whom? What evil would thy words disclose?

EL. Of him who gave me birth. I am their slave.

OR. Whose power compels thee to this sufferance?

EL. One called my mother, most unmotherly.

OR. How? by main force, or by degrading shames?

EL. By force and shames, and every kind of evil.

OR. And is there none to succour or prevent?

EL. None. Him I had, you give me here in dust.

[1199-1229] OR. How mine eye pities thee this while, poor maid!

EL. Know now, none ever pitied me but you.

OR. None ever came whose heart like sorrow wrung.

EL. Is’t possible we have some kinsman here?

OR. I will tell it, if these women here be friendly.

EL. They are. They may be trusted. Only speak.

OR. Let go yon vase, that thou may’st learn the whole.

EL. Nay, by the Gods! be not so cruel, sir!

OR. Obey me and thou shalt not come to harm.

EL. Ah, never rob me of what most I love!

OR. You must not hold it.

EL. O me miserable
For thee, Orestes, if I lose thy tomb!

OR. Speak no rash word. Thou hast no right to mourn.

EL. No right to mourn my brother who is gone?

OR. Such utterance belongs not to thy tongue,

EL. Oh, am I thus dishonoured of the dead?

OR. Far from dishonour. But this ne’er was thine.

EL. Is’t not Orestes’ body that I bear?

OR. Nay, but the idle dressing of a tale.

EL. And where is his poor body’s resting-place?

OR. Nowhere. Seek not the living with the dead,

EL. My son, what saidst thou?

OR. Nought but what is true.

EL. Doth he yet live?

OR. If I have life in me.

EL. Art thou Orestes?

OR. Let my signet here,
That was our father’s, tell thine eyes, I am.

EL. O day of days!

OR. Time hath no happier hour.

EL. Is it thy voice?

OR. Hearken not otherwhere.

EL. Have my arms caught thee?

OR. Hold me so for aye!

EL. O dearest women, Argives of my home!
Ye see Orestes, dead in craft, but now
By that same craft delivered and preserved.

[1230-1270] CH. We see, dear daughter, and the gladsome tear
Steals from our eye to greet the bright event.

EL. Offspring of him I loved beyond all telling!I 1
Ah! thou art come, — hast found me, eye to eye
Behold’st the face thou didst desire to see.

OR. True, I am here; but bide in silence still.

EL. Wherefore?

OR. Hush! speak not loud, lest one within should hearken.

EL. By ever-virgin Artemis, ne’er will I

Think worthy of my fear
This useless mass of woman-cowardice
Burdening the house within,
Not peering out of door.

OR. Yet know that women too have might in war.
Of that methinks thou hast feeling evidence.

EL. Ah me! thou hast unveiled
And thrust before my gaze
That burning load of my distress
No time will soothe, no remedy will heal.

OR. I know that too. But when we are face to face
With the evildoers, — then let remembrance work.

EL. All times alike are fit with instant painI 2
Justly to mind me of that dreadful day;
Even now but hardly hath my tongue been free.

OR. Yes, that is it. Therefore preserve this boon.

EL. Whereby?

OR. Put limits to unseasonable talk.

EL. Ah! brother, who, when thou art come,
Could find it meet to exchange
Language for silence, as thou bidst me do?
Since beyond hope or thought
Was this thy sight to me.

OR. God gave me to your sight when so he willed.

EL. O heaven of grace beyond
The joy I knew but now!
If God hath brought thee to our roof,
A miracle of bounty then is here.

[]1271-1304 OR. I hate to curb the gladness of thy spirit,
But yet I fear this ecstasy of joy.

EL. Oh! after all these years II

EL. Oh, after all these years,
Now thou at length hast sped
Thy dearest advent on the wished-for way,
Do not, in all this woe
Thou seest surrounding me —

OR. What means this prayer?

EL. Forbid me not my joy,
Nor make me lose the brightness of thy face!

OR. Deep were my wrath at him who should attempt it.

EL. Is my prayer heard?

OR. Why doubt it?

EL. Friends, I learned
A tale beyond my thought; and hearing I restrained
My passion, voiceless in my misery,
Uttering no cry. But now
I have thee safe; now, dearest, thou art come,
With thy blest countenance, which I
Can ne’er forget, even at the worst of woe.

OR. A truce now to unnecessary words.
My mother’s vileness and Aegisthus’ waste,
Draining and squandering with spendthrift hand
Our patrimony, tell me not anew.
Such talk might stifle opportunity.
But teach me, as befits the present need,
What place may serve by lurking vigilance
Or sudden apparition to o’erwhelm
Our foes in the adventure of to-day.
And, when we pass within, take heedful care
Bright looks betray thee not unto our mother.
But groan as for the dire calamity
Vainly reported: — Let’s achieve success,
Then with free hearts we may rejoice and laugh.

EL. Dear brother, wheresoe’er thy pleasure leads,
My will shall follow, since the joys I know,

Not from myself I took them, but from thee.
And ne’er would I consent thy slightest grief
[1305-1342] Should win for me great gain. Ill should I then
Serve the divinity of this high hour!
Thou knowest how matters in the palace stand.
Thou hast surely heard, Aegisthus is from home,
And she, our mother, is within. Nor fear
She should behold me with a smiling face.
Mine ancient hate of her hath sunk too deep.
And from the time I saw thee, tears of joy
Will cease not. Wherefore should I stint their flow?
I, who in this thy coming have beheld
Thee dead and living? Strangely hast thou wrought
On me; — that should my father come alive,
I would not think the sight were miracle,
But sober truth. Since such thy presence, then,
Lead as thy spirit prompts. For I alone
Of two things surely had achieved one,
Noble deliverance or a noble death.

OR. Be silent; for I hear within the house
A footstep coming forth.

EL. (loudly). Strangers, go in!
For none within the palace will reject
Your burden, nor be gladdened by the event.

Enter the Old Man.

OLD M. O lost in folly and bereft of soul!
Is’t that your care for life hath ebbed away,
Or were you born without intelligence,
When fallen, not near, but in the midst of ill,
And that the greatest, ye perceive it not?
Had I not watched the doors this while, your deeds
Had gone within the palace ere yourselves.
But, as things are, my care hath fenced you round.
Now, then, have done with long-protracted talk,
And this insatiable outburst of joy,
And enter, for in such attempts as these

Delay is harmful: and ´tis more than time.

OR. But how shall I find matters there within?

OLD M. Well. You are shielded by their ignorance.

OR. That means you have delivered me as dead.

OLD M. Alone of dead men thou art here above.

[1343-1375] OR. Doth this delight them, or how went the talk?

OLD M. I will report, when all is done. Meanwhile,
Know, all is well with them, even what is evil.

EL. Who is this, brother? I beseech thee, tell.

OR. Dost not perceive?

EL. I cannot even imagine.

OR. Know’st not into whose hands thou gav’st me once?

EL. Whose hands? How say you?

OR. His, who through thy care
Conveyed me secretly to Phocis’ plain.

EL. What! is this he, whom I, of all the band,
Found singly faithful in our father’s death?

OR. He is that man. No more!

EL. O gladsome day!
Dear only saviour of our father’s house,
How earnest thou hither? Art thou he indeed,
That didst preserve Orestes and myself
From many sorrows? O dear hands, kind feet,
Swift in our service, — how couldst thou so long
Be near, nor show one gleam, but didst destroy
My heart with words, hiding the loveliest deeds?
Father! — in thee methinks I see my father.
O welcome! thou of all the world to me
Most hated and most loved in one short hour.

OLD M. Enough, dear maiden! Many nights and days
Are circling hitherward, that shall reveal
In clear recountment all that came between.
But to you two that stand beside I tell,
Now is your moment, with the Queen alone,
And none of men within; but if you pause,
Know that with others of profounder skill
You'll have to strive, more than your present foes.

OR. Then, Pylades, we need no more to dwell
On words, but enter on this act with speed,
First worshipping the holy shrines o' the Gods
That were my father's, harboured at the gate.
[They pass within. ELECTRA remains in an attitude of prayer

[1376-1406] EL. O King Apollo! hear them graciously,
And hear me too, that with incessant hand
Honoured thee richly from my former store!
And now, fierce slayer, I importune thee,
And woo thee with such gifts as I can give,
Be kindly aidant to this enterprise,
And make the world take note, what meed of bane
Heaven still bestows on man's iniquity.[ELECTRA goes within

CH. Lo, where the War-god moves1
With soft, sure footstep, on to his design,
Breathing hot slaughter of an evil feud!
Even now the inevitable hounds that track
Dark deeds of hideous crime
Are gone beneath the covert of the domes.
Not long in wavering suspense shall hang
The dreaming presage of my wistful soul.

For lo! within is led2
With crafty tread the avenger of the shades,
Even to his father's throne of ancient power,
And in his hand the bright new-sharpened death!
And Hermes, Maia's son,
Is leading him, and hath concealed the guile
Even to the fatal end in clouds of night.

His time of weary waiting all is o´er.

Re-enter ELECTRA.

EL. O dearest women! they are even now
About it. Only bide in silence still.

CH. What is the present scene?

EL. She decks the vase
For burial, and they both are standing by.

CH. And wherefore hast thou darted forth?

EL. To watch
Aegisthus' coming, that he enter not
At unawares.

CLY. (within).
Ah! ah! Woe for the house,
Desert of friends, and filled with hands of death!

EL. A cry within! Did ye not hear it, friends?

[1407-1432] CH. Would I had not! I heard, and shivered through.

CLY. (within).
Oh me! Alas, Aegisthus! where art thou?

EL. Hark! yet again that sound!

CLY. (within). O son, have pity!
Pity the womb that bare thee.

EL. Thou hadst none
For him, nor for his father, in that day.

HALF-CH. Poor city! hapless race!1
Thy destiny to-day
Wears thee away, away.
What morn shall see thy face?

CLY. (within). Oh, I am smitten!

EL. Give me another stroke

EL. Give a second stroke,
If thou hast power.

CLY. (within). Oh me! again, again!

EL. Would thou wert shrieking for Aegisthus too!

CH. The curse hath found, and they in earth who lie
Are living powers to-day.
Long dead, they drain away
The streaming blood of those who made them die.

Enter ORESTES and PYLADES.

Behold, they come, they come!
His red hand dripping as he moves
With drops of sacrifice the War-god loves.
My ‘wildered heart is dumb.

EL. How is it with you, brother?

OR. If Apollo
Spake rightfully, the state within is well.

EL. Wretched one, is she dead?

OR. No more have fear
Thou shalt be slighted by thy mother’s will.

CH. Cease, for I see Aegisthus near in view.

EL. In, in again, boys!

OR. Where do ye behold
The tyrant?

EL. To our hand from yonder gate
He comes with beaming look.

HALF-CH. Haste, with what speed ye may,2 [1433-1461]
Stand on the doorway stone,
That, having thus much done,
Ye may do all to-day.

OR. Fear not: we will perform it.

EL. Speed ye now:
Follow your thought.

OR. We are already there.

EL. Leave matters here to me. All shall go well. [Exit ORESTES with PYLADES

CH. Few words, as if in gentleness, ‘twere good
To utter in his ear,
That, eager and unware,
One step may launch him on the field of blood.

Enter AEGISTHUS.

AEGISTHUS. Which of you know where are the Phocian men
Who brought the news I hear, Orestes’ life
Hath suffered shipwreck in a chariot-race?
You, you I question, you in former time
So fearless! You methinks most feelingly
Can tell us, for it touches you most near.

EL. I know: assure thee. Else had I not heard
The dearest of all fortunes to my heart.

AEG. Where are the strangers then? Enlighten me.

EL. Yonder. Their hostess entertained them well.

AEG. And did they certainly report him dead?

EL. Not only so. They showed him to our sight.

AEG. May this clear evidence be mine to see?

EL. I envy not the sight that waits you there.

AEG. Against their wont thy words have given me joy.

EL. Much joy be thine, if this be joy to thee!

AEG. Silence, I say! Wide let the gates be flung!

For all the Myceneans to behold
And all in Argolis, that if but one
Hath heretofore been buoyed on empty hopes
Fixed in Orestes, seeing him now dead,
[1462-1493] He may accept my manage, and not wait
For our stern chastisement to teach him sense.

EL. My lesson is already learnt: at length
I am schooled to labour with the stronger will.
[The body of CLYTEMNESTRA is disclosed under a veil: ORESTES standing by

AEG. Zeus! Divine envy surely hath laid low
The form I here behold. But if the truth
Provoke Heaven's wrath, be it unexpressed. — Unveil!
Off with all hindrance, that mine eye may see,
And I may mourn my kinsman as I should.

OR. Thyself put forth thy hand. Not mine but thine
To look and speak with kindness to this corse.

AEG. I will, for thou advisest well; but thou,
Call Clytemnestra, if she be within. [AEGISTHUS lifts the shroud

OR. She is beside thee, gaze not otherwhere.

AEG. What do I see! oh!

OR. Why so strange? Whom fear you?

AEG. Who are the men into whose midmost toils
All hapless I am fallen?

OR. Ha! knowest thou not
Thou hast been taking living men for dead?

AEG. I understand that saying. Woe is me!
I know, Orestes' voice addresseth me.

OR. A prophet! How wert thou so long deceived?

AEG. Undone, undone! Yet let me speak one word.

EL. Brother, by Heaven, no more! Let him not speak.
When death is certain, what do men in woe
Gain from a little time? Kill him at once!
And, killed, expose him to such burial
From dogs and vultures, as beseemeth such,
Far from our view. Nought less will solace me
For the remembrance of a life of pain.

OR. Go in and tarry not. No contest this
Of verbal question, but of life or death.

AEG. Why drive you me within? If this you do
Be noble, why must darkness hide the deed?
Why not destroy me out of hand?

[1494-1510] OR. Command not!
Enter, and in the place where ye cut down
My father, thou shalt yield thy life to me.

AEG. Is there no help but this abode must see
The past and future ills of Pelops' race?

OR. Thine anyhow. That I can prophesy
With perfect inspiration to thine ear.

AEG. The skill you boast belonged not to your sire.

OR. You question and delay. Go in!

AEG. Lead on.

OR. Nay, go thou first.

AEG. That I may not escape thee?

OR. No, that thou may'st not have thy wish in death.
I may not stint one drop of bitterness.
And would this doom were given without reprieve,
If any try to act beyond the law,
To kill them. Then the wicked would be few.

LEADER OF CH. O seed of Atreus! how triumphantly
Through grief and hardness thou hast freedom found,

With full achievement in this onset crowned!

OEDIPUS AT COLONUS

Translated by F. Storr

Written shortly before Sophocles' death in 406 BC and produced by Sophocles' grandson at the Festival of Dionysus in 401 BC, *Oedipus at Colonus* is the third of the three Theban plays and describes the end of Oedipus' tragic life. Legends differ as to the site of Oedipus' death and Sophocles sets the place at Colonus, a village near Athens and also Sophocles' own birthplace, where the blinded Oedipus has come with his daughters Antigone and Ismene as suppliants of the Erinyes.

As the play opens, Oedipus enters the village of Colonus, led by Antigone, and sits down on a stone. They are approached by a villager, who demands that they leave, because that ground is sacred to the Furies. Oedipus recognises this as a sign, for when he received the prophesy that he would kill his father and marry his mother, Apollo also revealed to him that at the end of his life he would die at a place sacred to the Furies, and be a blessing for the land in which he is buried.

The chorus of old men from the village enters and persuades Oedipus to leave the holy ground. They then question him about his identity and are horrified to discover that he is the son of Laius. Although they promised not to harm Oedipus, they wish to expel him from their city, fearing that he will curse it. Oedipus answers by explaining that he is not morally responsible for his crimes, since he killed his father in self-defence. Furthermore, he asks to see their king, Theseus, saying, "I come as someone sacred, someone filled with piety and power, bearing a great gift for all your people." The chorus is alarmed and decides to reserve their judgment of Oedipus until Theseus, king of Athens, arrives.

Ismene arrives on horse, rejoicing to see her father and sister. She brings the news that Eteocles has seized the throne of Thebes from his elder brother, Polynices, while Polynices is gathering support from the Argives to attack the city. Both sons have heard from an oracle that the outcome of the conflict will depend on where their father is buried. Ismene tells her father that it is Creon's plan to come for him and bury him at the border of Thebes, without proper burial rites, so that the power which the oracle says his grave will have will not be granted to any other land. Hearing this, Oedipus curses both of his sons for not treating him well, contrasting them with his devoted daughters. He pledges

allegiance with neither of his feuding sons, but with the people of Colonus, who thus far have treated him well, and further asks them for protection from Creon.

As Oedipus trespassed on the holy ground of the Euminides, the villagers tell him that he must perform certain rites to appease them. Ismene volunteers to go perform them for him and departs, while Antigone remains with Oedipus. Meanwhile, the chorus questions Oedipus once more, desiring to know the details of his incest and patricide. After he relates his sorrowful story to them, Theseus enters, and in contrast to the prying chorus states, “I know all about you, son of Laius.” He sympathizes with Oedipus, and offers him unconditional aid, causing Oedipus to praise Theseus and offer him the gift of his burial site, which will ensure victory in a future conflict with Thebes. Theseus protests, saying that the two cities are friendly, and Oedipus responds with what is perhaps the most famous speech in the play. “Oh Theseus, dear friend, only the gods can never age, the gods can never die. All else in the world almighty Time obliterates, crushes all to nothing...” Theseus makes Oedipus a citizen of Athens, and leaves the chorus to guard him as he departs. The chorus sings about the glory and beauty of Athens.

Creon, who is the representative of Thebes, comes to Oedipus and feigns pity for him and his children, telling him that he should return to Thebes. Oedipus is horrified, and recounts all of the harms Creon has inflicted on him. Creon becomes angry and reveals that he has already captured Ismene; he then instructs his guards to forcibly seize Antigone. His men begin to carry them off toward Thebes, perhaps planning to use them as blackmail to get Oedipus to follow, out of a desire to return Thebans to Thebes, or simply out of anger. The chorus attempts to stop him, but Creon threatens to use force to bring Oedipus back to Thebes. The chorus then calls for Theseus, who comes from sacrificing to Poseidon to condemn Creon, telling him, “You have come to a city that practices justice, that sanctions nothing without law.” Creon replies by condemning Oedipus, saying “I knew your city would never harbour a father-killer...worse, a creature so corrupt, exposed as the mate, the unholy husband of his own mother.” Oedipus, infuriated, declares once more that he is not morally responsible for what he did. Theseus leads Creon away to retake the two girls. The Athenians overpower the Thebans and return both girls to Oedipus. Oedipus moves to kiss Theseus in gratitude, then draws back, acknowledging that he is still polluted.

Theseus then informs Oedipus that a suppliant has come to the temple of Poseidon and wishes to speak with him; it is Oedipus’ son Polynices, who has been banished from Thebes by his brother Eteocles. Oedipus does not want to talk to him, saying that he loathes the sound of his voice, but Antigone persuades

him to listen, saying, “Many other men have rebellious children, quick tempers too...but they listen to reason, they relent.” Oedipus gives in to her, and Polynices enters, lamenting Oedipus’ miserable condition and begging his father to speak to him. He tells Oedipus that he has been driven out of the Thebes unjustly by his brother, and that he is preparing to attack the city. He knows that this is the result of Oedipus’ curse on his sons, and begs his father to relent, even going so far as to say “We share the same fate” to his father. Oedipus tells him that he deserves his fate, for he cast his father out. He foretells that his two sons will kill each other in the coming battle. “Die! Die by your own blood brother’s hand — die! — killing the very man who drove you out! So I curse your life out!” Antigone tries to restrain her brother, telling him that he should not attack Thebes and avoid dying at his brother’s hand. Polynices refuses to be dissuaded, and exits.

Following their conversation there is a fierce thunderstorm, which Oedipus interprets as a sign from Zeus of his impending death. Calling for Theseus, he tells him that it is time for him to give the gift he promised to Athens. Filled with strength, the blind Oedipus stands and walks, calling for his children and Theseus to follow him. Then, a messenger enters and tells the chorus that Oedipus is dead. He led his children and Theseus away, then bathed himself and poured libations, while his daughters grieved. He told them that their burden of caring for him was gone, and asked Theseus to swear not to forsake his daughters. Then he sent his children away, for only Theseus could know the place of his death, and pass it on to his heir. When the messenger turned back to look at the spot where Oedipus last stood, he says that “We couldn’t see the man-he was gone-nowhere! And the king, alone, shielding his eyes, both hands spread out against his face as if-some terrible wonder flashed before his eyes and he, he could not bear to look.” Theseus enters with Antigone and Ismene, who are weeping and mourning their father. Antigone longs to see her father’s tomb, even to be buried there with him rather than live without him. The girls beg Theseus to take them, but he reminds them that the place is a secret, and that no one may go there. “And he said that if I kept my pledge, I’d keep my country free of harm forever.” Antigone agrees, and asks for passage back to Thebes, where she hopes to stop the Seven Against Thebes from marching. Everyone exits toward Athens.

There is less action in this play than in *Oedipus the King*, and more philosophical discussion. Here, Oedipus discusses his fate as related by the oracle, and claims that he is not fully guilty because his crimes of murder and incest were committed in ignorance. Despite being blinded and exiled and facing violence from Creon and his sons, in the end Oedipus is accepted and absolved

by Zeus.

In the years between the play's composition and its first performance, Athens underwent many changes. Defeated by the Spartans, the city was placed under the rule of the Thirty Tyrants, and the citizens who opposed their rule were exiled or executed. This certainly affected the way that early audiences reacted to the play, just as the invasion of Athens and its diminished power surely affected Sophocles as he composed the drama.

‘Oedipus at Colonus’ by Fulchran-Jean Harriet

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‘Oedipus at Colonus’ by Jean-Antoine-Théodore Giroust, 1788

ARGUMENT

Oedipus, the blind and banished King of Thebes, has come in his wanderings to Colonus, a deme of Athens, led by his daughter Antigone. He sits to rest on a rock just within a sacred grove of the Furies and is bidden depart by a passing native. But Oedipus, instructed by an oracle that he had reached his final resting-place, refuses to stir, and the stranger consents to go and consult the Elders of Colonus (the Chorus of the Play). Conducted to the spot they pity at first the blind beggar and his daughter, but on learning his name they are horror-striken and order him to quit the land. He appeals to the world-famed hospitality of Athens and hints at the blessings that his coming will confer on the State. They agree to await the decision of King Theseus. From Theseus Oedipus craves protection in life and burial in Attic soil; the benefits that will accrue shall be told later. Theseus departs having promised to aid and befriend him. No sooner has he gone than Creon enters with an armed guard who seize Antigone and carry her off (Ismene, the other sister, they have already captured) and he is about to lay hands on Oedipus, when Theseus, who has heard the tumult, hurries up and, upbraiding Creon for his lawless act, threatens to detain him till he has shown where the captives are and restored them. In the next scene Theseus returns bringing with him the rescued maidens. He informs Oedipus that a stranger who has taken sanctuary at the altar of Poseidon wishes to see him. It is Polyneices who has come to crave his father’s forgiveness and blessing, knowing by an oracle that victory will fall to the side that Oedipus espouses. But Oedipus spurns the hypocrite, and invokes a dire curse on both his unnatural sons. A sudden clap of thunder is heard, and as peal follows peal, Oedipus is aware that his hour is come and bids Antigone summon Theseus. Self-guided he leads the way to the spot where death should overtake him, attended by Theseus and his daughters. Halfway he bids his daughters farewell, and what followed none but Theseus knew. He was not (so the Messenger reports) for the gods took him.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

OEDIPUS, banished King of Thebes.
ANTIGONE, his daughter.
ISMENE, his daughter.
THESEUS, King of Athens.
CREON, brother of Jocasta, now reigning at Thebes.
POLYNEICES, elder son of Oedipus.
STRANGER, a native of Colonus.
MESSENGER, an attendant of Theseus.
CHORUS, citizens of Colonus.

Scene: In front of the grove of the Eumenides.

OEDIPUS AT COLONUS

Enter the blind OEDIPUS led by his daughter, ANTIGONE.

OEDIPUS
Child of an old blind sire, Antigone,
What region, say, whose city have we reached?
Who will provide today with scanted dole
This wanderer? 'Tis little that he craves,
And less obtains — that less enough for me;
For I am taught by suffering to endure,
And the long years that have grown old with me,
And last not least, by true nobility.
My daughter, if thou seest a resting place
On common ground or by some sacred grove,
Stay me and set me down. Let us discover
Where we have come, for strangers must inquire
Of denizens, and do as they are bid.

ANTIGONE
Long-suffering father, Oedipus, the towers
That fence the city still are faint and far;
But where we stand is surely holy ground;
A wilderness of laurel, olive, vine;
Within a choir or songster nightingales
Are warbling. On this native seat of rock
Rest; for an old man thou hast traveled far.

OEDIPUS
Guide these dark steps and seat me there secure.

ANTIGONE
If time can teach, I need not to be told.

OEDIPUS
Say, prithee, if thou knowest, where we are.

ANTIGONE
Athens I recognize, but not the spot.

OEDIPUS
That much we heard from every wayfarer.

ANTIGONE
Shall I go on and ask about the place?

OEDIPUS
Yes, daughter, if it be inhabited.

ANTIGONE
Sure there are habitations; but no need
To leave thee; yonder is a man hard by.

OEDIPUS
What, moving hitherward and on his way?

ANTIGONE
Say rather, here already. Ask him straight
The needful questions, for the man is here.
[Enter STRANGER]

OEDIPUS
O stranger, as I learn from her whose eyes
Must serve both her and me, that thou art here
Sent by some happy chance to serve our doubts —

STRANGER
First quit that seat, then question me at large:
The spot thou treadest on is holy ground.

OEDIPUS
What is the site, to what god dedicate?

STRANGER
Inviolable, untrod; goddesses,
Dread brood of Earth and Darkness, here abide.

OEDIPUS
Tell me the awful name I should invoke?

STRANGER
The Gracious Ones, All-seeing, so our folk

Call them, but elsewhere other names are rife.

OEDIPUS
Then may they show their suppliant grace, for I
From this your sanctuary will ne’er depart.

STRANGER
What word is this?

OEDIPUS
The watchword of my fate.

STRANGER
Nay, ’tis not mine to bid thee hence without
Due warrant and instruction from the State.

OEDIPUS
Now in God’s name, O stranger, scorn me not
As a wayfarer; tell me what I crave.

STRANGER
Ask; your request shall not be scorned by me.

OEDIPUS
How call you then the place wherein we bide?

STRANGER
Whate’er I know thou too shalt know; the place
Is all to great Poseidon consecrate.
Hard by, the Titan, he who bears the torch,
Prometheus, has his worship; but the spot
Thou treadest, the Brass-footed Threshold named,
Is Athens’ bastion, and the neighboring lands
Claim as their chief and patron yonder knight
Colonus, and in common bear his name.
Such, stranger, is the spot, to fame unknown,
But dear to us its native worshipers.

OEDIPUS
Thou sayest there are dwellers in these parts?

STRANGER

Surely; they bear the name of yonder god.

OEDIPUS
Ruled by a king or by the general voice?

STRANGER
The lord of Athens is our over-lord.

OEDIPUS
Who is this monarch, great in word and might?

STRANGER
Theseus, the son of Aegeus our late king.

OEDIPUS
Might one be sent from you to summon him?

STRANGER
Wherefore? To tell him aught or urge his coming?

OEDIPUS
Say a slight service may avail him much.

STRANGER
How can he profit from a sightless man?

OEDIPUS
The blind man’s words will be instinct with sight.

STRANGER
Heed then; I fain would see thee out of harm;
For by the looks, marred though they be by fate,
I judge thee noble; tarry where thou art,
While I go seek the burghers — those at hand,
Not in the city. They will soon decide
Whether thou art to rest or go thy way.
[Exit STRANGER]

OEDIPUS
Tell me, my daughter, has the stranger gone?

ANTIGONE

Yes, he has gone; now we are all alone,
And thou may'st speak, dear father, without fear.

OEDIPUS
Stern-visaged queens, since coming to this land
First in your sanctuary I bent the knee,
Frown not on me or Phoebus, who, when erst
He told me all my miseries to come,
Spake of this respite after many years,
Some haven in a far-off land, a rest
Vouchsafed at last by dread divinities.
"There," said he, "shalt thou round thy weary life,
A blessing to the land wherein thou dwell'st,
But to the land that cast thee forth, a curse."
And of my weird he promised signs should come,
Earthquake, or thunderclap, or lightning flash.
And now I recognize as yours the sign
That led my wanderings to this your grove;
Else had I never lighted on you first,
A wineless man on your seat of native rock.
O goddesses, fulfill Apollo's word,
Grant me some consummation of my life,
If haply I appear not all too vile,
A thrall to sorrow worse than any slave.
Hear, gentle daughters of primeval Night,
Hear, namesake of great Pallas; Athens, first
Of cities, pity this dishonored shade,
The ghost of him who once was Oedipus.

ANTIGONE
Hush! for I see some grey-beards on their way,
Their errand to spy out our resting-place.

OEDIPUS
I will be mute, and thou shalt guide my steps
Into the covert from the public road,
Till I have learned their drift. A prudent man
Will ever shape his course by what he learns.
[Enter CHORUS]

CHORUS
(Str. 1)
Ha! Where is he? Look around!
Every nook and corner scan!
He the all-presumptuous man,
Whither vanished? search the ground!
A wayfarer, I ween,
A wayfarer, no countryman of ours,
That old man must have been;
Never had native dared to tempt the Powers,
   Or enter their demesne,
The Maids in awe of whom each mortal cowers,
   Whose name no voice betrays nor cry,
   And as we pass them with averted eye,
We move hushed lips in reverent piety.
   But now some godless man,
   ’Tis rumored, here abides;
   The precincts through I scan,
   Yet wot not where he hides,
   The wretch profane!
   I search and search in vain.

OEDIPUS
   I am that man; I know you near
   Ears to the blind, they say, are eyes.

CHORUS
   O dread to see and dread to hear!

OEDIPUS
Oh sirs, I am no outlaw under ban.

CHORUS
Who can he be — Zeus save us! — this old man?

OEDIPUS
No favorite of fate,
That ye should envy his estate,
O, Sirs, would any happy mortal, say,
Grope by the light of other eyes his way,

Or face the storm upon so frail a stay?

CHORUS
(Ant. 1)
Wast thou then sightless from thy birth?
Evil, methinks, and long
Thy pilgrimage on earth.
Yet add not curse to curse and wrong to wrong.
I warn thee, trespass not
Within this hallowed spot,
Lest thou shouldst find the silent grassy glade
Where offerings are laid,
Bowls of spring water mingled with sweet mead.
Thou must not stay,
Come, come away,
Tired wanderer, dost thou heed?
(We are far off, but sure our voice can reach.)
If aught thou wouldst beseech,
Speak where 'tis right; till then refrain from speech.

OEDIPUS
Daughter, what counsel should we now pursue?

ANTIGONE
We must obey and do as here they do.

OEDIPUS
Thy hand then!

ANTIGONE
Here, O father, is my hand,

OEDIPUS
O Sirs, if I come forth at your command,
Let me not suffer for my confidence.

CHORUS
(Str. 2)
Against thy will no man shall drive thee hence.

OEDIPUS

Shall I go further?

CHORUS
Aye.

OEDIPUS
What further still?

CHORUS
Lead maiden, thou canst guide him where we will.

ANTIGONE 4
* * * * * *

OEDIPUS
* * * * * *

ANTIGONE
* * * * * *
Follow with blind steps, father, as I lead.

* * * * * *

CHORUS
In a strange land strange thou art;
To her will incline thy heart;
Honor whatso'er the State
Honors, all she frowns on hate.

OEDIPUS
Guide me child, where we may range
Safe within the paths of right;
Counsel freely may exchange
Nor with fate and fortune fight.

CHORUS
(Ant. 2)
Halt! Go no further than that rocky floor.

OEDIPUS
Stay where I now am?

CHORUS
Yes, advance no more.

OEDIPUS
May I sit down?

CHORUS
Move sideways towards the ledge,
And sit thee crouching on the scarped edge.

ANTIGONE
This is my office, father, O incline —

OEDIPUS
Ah me! ah me!

ANTIGONE
Thy steps to my steps, lean thine aged frame on mine.

OEDIPUS
Woe on my fate unblest!

CHORUS
Wanderer, now thou art at rest,
Tell me of thy birth and home,
From what far country art thou come,
Led on thy weary way, declare!

OEDIPUS
Strangers, I have no country. O forbear —

CHORUS
What is it, old man, that thou wouldst conceal?

OEDIPUS
Forbear, nor urge me further to reveal —

CHORUS
Why this reluctance?

OEDIPUS
Dread my lineage.

CHORUS
Say!

OEDIPUS
What must I answer, child, ah welladay!

CHORUS
Say of what stock thou comest, what man’s son —

OEDIPUS
Ah me, my daughter, now we are undone!

ANTIGONE
Speak, for thou standest on the slippery verge.

OEDIPUS
I will; no plea for silence can I urge.

CHORUS

Will neither speak? Come, Sir, why dally thus!

OEDIPUS
Know’st one of Laius’ —

CHORUS
Ha? Who!

OEDIPUS
Seed of Labdacus —

CHORUS
Oh Zeus!

OEDIPUS
The hapless Oedipus.

CHORUS
Art he?

OEDIPUS
Whate’er I utter, have no fear of me.

CHORUS
Begone!

OEDIPUS
O wretched me!

CHORUS
Begone!

OEDIPUS
O daughter, what will hap anon?

CHORUS
Forth from our borders speed ye both!

OEDIPUS
How keep you then your troth?

CHORUS
Heaven’s justice never smites

Him who ill with ill requites.
But if guile with guile contend,
Bane, not blessing, is the end.
Arise, begone and take thee hence straightway,
Lest on our land a heavier curse thou lay.

ANTIGONE
O sirs! ye suffered not my father blind,
Albeit gracious and to ruth inclined,
Knowing the deeds he wrought, not innocent,
But with no ill intent;
Yet heed a maiden's moan
Who pleads for him alone;
My eyes, not reft of sight,
Plead with you as a daughter's might
You are our providence,
O make us not go hence!
O with a gracious nod
Grant us the nigh despaired-of boon we crave?
Hear us, O hear,
But all that ye hold dear,
Wife, children, homestead, hearth and God!
Where will you find one, search ye ne'er so well.
Who 'scapes perdition if a god impel!

CHORUS
Surely we pity thee and him alike
Daughter of Oedipus, for your distress;
But as we reverence the decrees of Heaven
We cannot say aught other than we said.

OEDIPUS
O what avails renown or fair repute?
Are they not vanity? For, look you, now
Athens is held of States the most devout,
Athens alone gives hospitality
And shelters the vexed stranger, so men say.
Have I found so? I whom ye dislodged
First from my seat of rock and now would drive
Forth from your land, dreading my name alone;

For me you surely dread not, nor my deeds,
Deeds of a man more sinned against than sinning,
As I might well convince you, were it meet
To tell my mother's story and my sire's,
The cause of this your fear. Yet am I then
A villain born because in self-defense,
Striken, I struck the striker back again?
E'en had I known, no villainy 'twould prove:
But all unwitting whither I went, I went —
To ruin; my destroyers knew it well,
Wherefore, I pray you, sirs, in Heaven's name,
Even as ye bade me quit my seat, defend me.
O pay not a lip service to the gods
And wrong them of their dues. Bethink ye well,
The eye of Heaven beholds the just of men,
And the unjust, nor ever in this world
Has one sole godless sinner found escape.
Stand then on Heaven's side and never blot
Athens' fair scutcheon by abetting wrong.
I came to you a suppliant, and you pledged
Your honor; O preserve me to the end,
O let not this marred visage do me wrong!
A holy and god-fearing man is here
Whose coming purports comfort for your folk.
And when your chief arrives, whoe'er he be,
Then shall ye have my story and know all.
Meanwhile I pray you do me no despite.

CHORUS
The plea thou urgest, needs must give us pause,
Set forth in weighty argument, but we
Must leave the issue with the ruling powers.

OEDIPUS
Where is he, strangers, he who sways the realm?

CHORUS
In his ancestral seat; a messenger,
The same who sent us here, is gone for him.

OEDIPUS
And think you he will have such care or thought
For the blind stranger as to come himself?

CHORUS
Aye, that he will, when once he learns thy name.

OEDIPUS
But who will bear him word!

CHORUS
The way is long,
And many travelers pass to speed the news.
Be sure he'll hear and hasten, never fear;
So wide and far thy name is noised abroad,
That, were he ne'er so spent and loth to move,
He would bestir him when he hears of thee.

OEDIPUS
Well, may he come with blessing to his State
And me! Who serves his neighbor serves himself.

ANTIGONE
Zeus! What is this? What can I say or think?

OEDIPUS
What now, Antigone?

ANTIGONE
I see a woman
Riding upon a colt of Aetna's breed;
She wears for headgear a Thessalian hat
To shade her from the sun. Who can it be?
She or a stranger? Do I wake or dream?
'This she; 'tis not — I cannot tell, alack;
It is no other! Now her bright'ning glance
Greets me with recognition, yes, 'tis she,
Herself, Ismene!

OEDIPUS
Ha! what say ye, child?

ANTIGONE
That I behold thy daughter and my sister,
And thou wilt know her straightway by her voice.
[Enter ISMENE]

ISMENE
Father and sister, names to me most sweet,
How hardly have I found you, hardly now
When found at last can see you through my tears!

OEDIPUS
Art come, my child?

ISMENE
O father, sad thy plight!

OEDIPUS
Child, thou art here?

ISMENE
Yes, ’twas a weary way.

OEDIPUS
Touch me, my child.

ISMENE
I give a hand to both.

OEDIPUS
O children — sisters!

ISMENE
O disastrous plight!

OEDIPUS
Her plight and mine?

ISMENE
Aye, and my own no less.

OEDIPUS
What brought thee, daughter?

ISMENE
Father, care for thee.

OEDIPUS
A daughter’s yearning?

ISMENE
Yes, and I had news
I would myself deliver, so I came
With the one thrall who yet is true to me.

OEDIPUS
Thy valiant brothers, where are they at need?

ISMENE
They are — enough, ’tis now their darkest hour.

OEDIPUS
Out on the twain! The thoughts and actions all
Are framed and modeled on Egyptian ways.
For there the men sit at the loom indoors
While the wives slave abroad for daily bread.
So you, my children — those whom I behooved
To bear the burden, stay at home like girls,
While in their stead my daughters moil and drudge,
Lightening their father’s misery. The one
Since first she grew from girlish feebleness
To womanhood has been the old man’s guide
And shared my weary wandering, roaming oft
Hungry and footsore through wild forest ways,
In drenching rains and under scorching suns,
Careless herself of home and ease, if so
Her sire might have her tender ministry.
And thou, my child, whilom thou wentest forth,
Eluding the Cadmeians’ vigilance,
To bring thy father all the oracles
Concerning Oedipus, and didst make thyself
My faithful lieger, when they banished me.
And now what mission summons thee from home,
What news, Ismene, hast thou for thy father?

This much I know, thou com’st not empty-handed,
Without a warning of some new alarm.

ISMENE
The toil and trouble, father, that I bore
To find thy lodging-place and how thou faredst,
I spare thee; surely ‘twere a double pain
To suffer, first in act and then in telling;
’Tis the misfortune of thine ill-starred sons
I come to tell thee. At the first they willed
To leave the throne to Creon, minded well
Thus to remove the inveterate curse of old,
A canker that infected all thy race.
But now some god and an infatuate soul
Have stirred betwixt them a mad rivalry
To grasp at sovereignty and kingly power.
Today the hot-branded youth, the younger born,
Is keeping Polyneices from the throne,
His elder, and has thrust him from the land.
The banished brother (so all Thebes reports)
Fled to the vale of Argos, and by help
Of new alliance there and friends in arms,
Swears he will stablish Argos straight as lord
Of the Cadmeian land, or, if he fail,
Exalt the victor to the stars of heaven.
This is no empty tale, but deadly truth,
My father; and how long thy agony,
Ere the gods pity thee, I cannot tell.

OEDIPUS
Hast thou indeed then entertained a hope
The gods at last will turn and rescue me?

ISMENE
Yea, so I read these latest oracles.

OEDIPUS
What oracles? What hath been uttered, child?

ISMENE

Thy country (so it runs) shall yearn in time
To have thee for their weal alive or dead.

OEDIPUS
And who could gain by such a one as I?

ISMENE
On thee, ’tis said, their sovereignty depends.

OEDIPUS
So, when I cease to be, my worth begins.

ISMENE
The gods, who once abased, uplift thee now.

OEDIPUS
Poor help to raise an old man fallen in youth.

ISMENE
Howe’er that be, ’tis for this cause alone
That Creon comes to thee — and comes anon.

OEDIPUS
With what intent, my daughter? Tell me plainly.

ISMENE
To plant thee near the Theban land, and so
Keep thee within their grasp, yet now allow
Thy foot to pass beyond their boundaries.

OEDIPUS
What gain they, if I lay outside?

OEDIPUS
Thy tomb,
If disappointed, brings on them a curse.

OEDIPUS
It needs no god to tell what’s plain to sense.

ISMENE
Therefore they fain would have thee close at hand,

Not where thou wouldst be master of thyself.

OEDIPUS
Mean they to shroud my bones in Theban dust?

ISMENE
Nay, father, guilt of kinsman’s blood forbids.

OEDIPUS
Then never shall they be my masters, never!

ISMENE
Thebes, thou shalt rue this bitterly some day!

OEDIPUS
When what conjunction comes to pass, my child?

ISMENE
Thy angry wraith, when at thy tomb they stand. 6

OEDIPUS
And who hath told thee what thou tell’st me, child?

ISMENE
Envoys who visited the Delphic hearth.

OEDIPUS
Hath Phoebus spoken thus concerning me?

ISMENE
So say the envoys who returned to Thebes.

OEDIPUS
And can a son of mine have heard of this?

ISMENE
Yea, both alike, and know its import well.

OEDIPUS
They knew it, yet the ignoble greed of rule
Outweighed all longing for their sire’s return.

ISMENE

Grievous thy words, yet I must own them true.

OEDIPUS
Then may the gods ne'er quench their fatal feud,
And mine be the arbitrament of the fight,
For which they now are arming, spear to spear;
That neither he who holds the scepter now
May keep this throne, nor he who fled the realm
Return again. *They* never raised a hand,
When I their sire was thrust from hearth and home,
When I was banned and banished, what recked they?
Say you 'twas done at my desire, a grace
Which the state, yielding to my wish, allowed?
Not so; for, mark you, on that very day
When in the tempest of my soul I craved
Death, even death by stoning, none appeared
To further that wild longing, but anon,
When time had numbed my anguish and I felt
My wrath had all outrun those errors past,
Then, then it was the city went about
By force to oust me, respited for years;
And then my sons, who should as sons have helped,
Did nothing: and, one little word from them
Was all I needed, and they spoke no word,
But let me wander on for evermore,
A banished man, a beggar. These two maids
Their sisters, girls, gave all their sex could give,
Food and safe harborage and filial care;
While their two brethren sacrificed their sire
For lust of power and sceptred sovereignty.
No! me they ne'er shall win for an ally,
Nor will this Theban kingship bring them gain;
That know I from this maiden's oracles,
And those old prophecies concerning me,
Which Phoebus now at length has brought to pass.
Come Creon then, come all the mightiest
In Thebes to seek me; for if ye my friends,
Championed by those dread Powers indigenous,
Espouse my cause; then for the State ye gain

A great deliverer, for my foemen bane.

CHORUS
Our pity, Oedipus, thou needs must move,
Thou and these maidens; and the stronger plea
Thou urgest, as the savior of our land,
Disposes me to counsel for thy weal.

OEDIPUS
Aid me, kind sirs; I will do all you bid.

CHORUS
First make atonement to the deities,
Whose grove by trespass thou didst first profane.

OEDIPUS
After what manner, stranger? Teach me, pray.

CHORUS
Make a libation first of water fetched
With undefiled hands from living spring.

OEDIPUS
And after I have gotten this pure draught?

CHORUS
Bowls thou wilt find, the carver’s handiwork;
Crown thou the rims and both the handles crown —

OEDIPUS
With olive shoots or blocks of wool, or how?

CHORUS
With wool from fleece of yearling freshly shorn.

OEDIPUS
What next? how must I end the ritual?

CHORUS
Pour thy libation, turning to the dawn.

OEDIPUS

Pouring it from the urns whereof ye spake?

CHORUS
Yea, in three streams; and be the last bowl drained
To the last drop.

OEDIPUS
And wherewith shall I fill it,
Ere in its place I set it? This too tell.

CHORUS
With water and with honey; add no wine.

OEDIPUS
And when the embowered earth hath drunk thereof?

CHORUS
Then lay upon it thrice nine olive sprays
With both thy hands, and offer up this prayer.

OEDIPUS
I fain would hear it; that imports the most.

CHORUS
That, as we call them Gracious, they would deign
To grant the suppliant their saving grace.
So pray thyself or whoso pray for thee,
In whispered accents, not with lifted voice;
Then go and look back. Do as I bid,
And I shall then be bold to stand thy friend;
Else, stranger, I should have my fears for thee.

OEDIPUS
Hear ye, my daughters, what these strangers say?

ANTIGONE
We listened, and attend thy bidding, father.

OEDIPUS
I cannot go, disabled as I am
Doubly, by lack of strength and lack of sight;
But one of you may do it in my stead;

For one, I trow, may pay the sacrifice
Of thousands, if his heart be leal and true.
So to your work with speed, but leave me not
Untended; for this frame is all too week
To move without the help of guiding hand.

ISMENE
Then I will go perform these rites, but where
To find the spot, this have I yet to learn.

CHORUS
Beyond this grove; if thou hast need of aught,
The guardian of the close will lend his aid.

ISMENE
I go, and thou, Antigone, meanwhile
Must guard our father. In a parent's cause
Toil, if there be toil, is of no account.
[Exit ISMENE]

CHORUS
(Str. 1)
Ill it is, stranger, to awake
Pain that long since has ceased to ache,
And yet I fain would hear —

OEDIPUS
What thing?

CHORUS
Thy tale of cruel suffering
For which no cure was found,
The fate that held thee bound.

OEDIPUS
O bid me not (as guest I claim
This grace) expose my shame.

CHORUS
The tale is bruited far and near,
And echoes still from ear to ear.

The truth, I fain would hear.

OEDIPUS
Ah me!

CHORUS
I prithee yield.

OEDIPUS
Ah me!

CHORUS
Grant my request, I granted all to thee.

OEDIPUS
(Ant. 1)
Know then I suffered ills most vile, but none
(So help me Heaven!) from acts in malice done.

CHORUS
Say how.

OEDIPUS
The State around
An all unwitting bridegroom bound
An impious marriage chain;
That was my bane.

CHORUS
Didst thou in sooth then share
A bed incestuous with her that bare —

OEDIPUS
It stabs me like a sword,
That two-edged word,
O stranger, but these maids — my own —

CHORUS
Say on.

OEDIPUS
Two daughters, curses twain.

CHORUS
Oh God!

OEDIPUS
Sprang from the wife and mother’s travail-pain.

CHORUS
(Str. 2)
What, then thy offspring are at once —

OEDIPUS
Too true.
Their father’s very sister’s too.

CHORUS
Oh horror!

OEDIPUS
Horrors from the boundless deep
Back on my soul in refluent surges sweep.

CHORUS
Thou hast endured —

OEDIPUS
Intolerable woe.

CHORUS
And sinned —

OEDIPUS
I sinned not.

CHORUS
How so?

OEDIPUS
I served the State; would I had never won
That graceless grace by which I was undone.

CHORUS
(Ant. 2)

And next, unhappy man, thou hast shed blood?

OEDIPUS
Must ye hear more?

CHORUS
A father's?

OEDIPUS
Flood on flood
Whelms me; that word's a second mortal blow.

CHORUS
Murderer!

OEDIPUS
Yes, a murderer, but know —

CHORUS
What canst thou plead?

OEDIPUS
A plea of justice.

CHORUS
How?

OEDIPUS
I slew who else would me have slain;
I slew without intent,
A wretch, but innocent
In the law's eye, I stand, without a stain.

CHORUS
Behold our sovereign, Theseus, Aegeus' son,
Comes at thy summons to perform his part.
[Enter THESEUS]

THESEUS
Oft had I heard of thee in times gone by —
The bloody mutilation of thine eyes —
And therefore know thee, son of Laius.

All that I lately gathered on the way
Made my conjecture doubly sure; and now
Thy garb and that marred visage prove to me
That thou art he. So pitying thine estate,
Most ill-starred Oedipus, I fain would know
What is the suit ye urge on me and Athens,
Thou and the helpless maiden at thy side.
Declare it; dire indeed must be the tale
Whereat *I* should recoil. I too was reared,
Like thee, in exile, and in foreign lands
Wrestled with many perils, no man more.
Wherefore no alien in adversity
Shall seek in vain my succor, nor shalt thou;
I know myself a mortal, and my share
In what the morrow brings no more than thine.

OEDIPUS
Theseus, thy words so apt, so generous
So comfortable, need no long reply
Both who I am and of what lineage sprung,
And from what land I came, thou hast declared.
So without prologue I may utter now
My brief petition, and the tale is told.

THESEUS
Say on, and tell me what I fain would learn.

OEDIPUS
I come to offer thee this woe-worn frame,
A gift not fair to look on; yet its worth
More precious far than any outward show.

THESEUS
What profit dost thou proffer to have brought?

OEDIPUS
Hereafter thou shalt learn, not yet, methinks.

THESEUS
When may we hope to reap the benefit?

OEDIPUS
When I am dead and thou hast buried me.

THESEUS
Thou cravest life’s last service; all before —
Is it forgotten or of no account?

OEDIPUS
Yea, the last boon is warrant for the rest.

THESEUS
The grace thou cravest then is small indeed.

OEDIPUS
Nay, weigh it well; the issue is not slight.

THESEUS
Thou meanest that betwixt thy sons and me?

OEDIPUS
Prince, they would fain convey me back to Thebes.

THESEUS
If there be no compulsion, then methinks
To rest in banishment befits not thee.

OEDIPUS
Nay, when *I* wished it *they* would not consent.

THESEUS
For shame! such temper misbecomes the faller.

OEDIPUS
Chide if thou wilt, but first attend my plea.

THESEUS
Say on, I wait full knowledge ere I judge.

OEDIPUS
O Theseus, I have suffered wrongs on wrongs.

THESEUS
Wouldst tell the old misfortune of thy race?

OEDIPUS
No, that has grown a byword throughout Greece.

THESEUS
What then can be this more than mortal grief?

OEDIPUS
My case stands thus; by my own flesh and blood
I was expelled my country, and can ne'er
Thither return again, a parricide.

THESEUS
Why fetch thee home if thou must needs obey.

THESEUS
What are they threatened by the oracle?

OEDIPUS
Destruction that awaits them in this land.

THESEUS
What can beget ill blood 'twixt them and me?

OEDIPUS
Dear son of Aegeus, to the gods alone
Is given immunity from eld and death;
But nothing else escapes all-ruinous time.
Earth's might decays, the might of men decays,
Honor grows cold, dishonor flourishes,
There is no constancy 'twixt friend and friend,
Or city and city; be it soon or late,
Sweet turns to bitter, hate once more to love.
If now 'tis sunshine betwixt Thebes and thee
And not a cloud, Time in his endless course
Gives birth to endless days and nights, wherein
The merest nothing shall suffice to cut
With serried spears your bonds of amity.
Then shall my slumbering and buried corpse
In its cold grave drink their warm life-blood up,
If Zeus be Zeus and Phoebus still speak true.
No more: 'tis ill to tear aside the veil

Of mysteries; let me cease as I began:
Enough if thou wilt keep thy plighted troth,
Then shall thou ne'er complain that Oedipus
Proved an unprofitable and thankless guest,
Except the gods themselves shall play me false.

CHORUS
The man, my lord, has from the very first
Declared his power to offer to our land
These and like benefits.

THESEUS
Who could reject
The proffered amity of such a friend?
First, he can claim the hospitality
To which by mutual contract we stand pledged:
Next, coming here, a suppliant to the gods,
He pays full tribute to the State and me;
His favors therefore never will I spurn,
But grant him the full rights of citizen;
And, if it suits the stranger here to bide,
I place him in your charge, or if he please
Rather to come with me — choose, Oedipus,
Which of the two thou wilt. Thy choice is mine.

OEDIPUS
Zeus, may the blessing fall on men like these!

THESEUS
What dost thou then decide — to come with me?

OEDIPUS
Yea, were it lawful — but 'tis rather here —

THESEUS
What wouldst thou here? I shall not thwart thy wish.

OEDIPUS
Here shall I vanquish those who cast me forth.

THESEUS

Then were thy presence here a boon indeed.

OEDIPUS
Such shall it prove, if thou fulfill’st thy pledge.

THESEUS
Fear not for me; I shall not play thee false.

OEDIPUS
No need to back thy promise with an oath.

THESEUS
An oath would be no surer than my word.

OEDIPUS
How wilt thou act then?

THESEUS
What is it thou fear’st?

OEDIPUS
My foes will come —

THESEUS
Our friends will look to that.

OEDIPUS
But if thou leave me?

THESEUS
Teach me not my duty.

OEDIPUS
’Tis fear constrains me.

THESEUS
My soul knows no fear!

OEDIPUS
Thou knowest not what threats —

THESEUS
I know that none

Shall hale thee hence in my despite. Such threats
Vented in anger oft, are blusterers,
An idle breath, forgot when sense returns.
And for thy foemen, though their words were brave,
Boasting to bring thee back, they are like to find
The seas between us wide and hard to sail.
Such my firm purpose, but in any case
Take heart, since Phoebus sent thee here. My name,
Though I be distant, warrants thee from harm.

CHORUS
(Str. 1)
Thou hast come to a steed-famed land for rest,
O stranger worn with toil,
To a land of all lands the goodliest
Colonus' glistening soil.
'Tis the haunt of the clear-voiced nightingale,
Who hid in her bower, among
The wine-dark ivy that wreathes the vale,
Trilleth her ceaseless song;
And she loves, where the clustering berries nod
O'er a sunless, windless glade,
The spot by no mortal footstep trod,
The pleasance kept for the Bacchic god,
Where he holds each night his revels wild
With the nymphs who fostered the lusty child.

(Ant. 1)
And fed each morn by the pearly dew
The starred narcissi shine,
And a wreath with the crocus' golden hue
For the Mother and Daughter twine.
And never the sleepless fountains cease
That feed Cephisus' stream,
But they swell earth's bosom with quick increase,
And their wave hath a crystal gleam.
And the Muses' quire will never disdain
To visit this heaven-favored plain,
Nor the Cyprian queen of the golden rein.

(Str. 2)
And here there grows, unpruned, untamed,
Terror to foemen's spear,
A tree in Asian soil unnamed,
By Pelops' Dorian isle unclaimed,
Self-nurtured year by year;
'Tis the grey-leaved olive that feeds our boys;
Nor youth nor withering age destroys
The plant that the Olive Planter tends
And the Grey-eyed Goddess herself defends.

(Ant. 2)
Yet another gift, of all gifts the most
Prized by our fatherland, we boast —
The might of the horse, the might of the sea;
Our fame, Poseidon, we owe to thee,
Son of Kronos, our king divine,
Who in these highways first didst fit
For the mouth of horses the iron bit;
Thou too hast taught us to fashion meet
For the arm of the rower the oar-blade fleet,
Swift as the Nereids' hundred feet
As they dance along the brine.

ANTIGONE
Oh land extolled above all lands, 'tis now
For thee to make these glorious titles good.

OEDIPUS
Why this appeal, my daughter?

ANTIGONE
Father, lo!
Creon approaches with his company.

OEDIPUS
Fear not, it shall be so; if we are old,
This country's vigor has no touch of age.
[Enter CREON with attendants]

CREON
Burghers, my noble friends, ye take alarm
At my approach (I read it in your eyes),
Fear nothing and refrain from angry words.
I come with no ill purpose; I am old,
And know the city whither I am come,
Without a peer amongst the powers of Greece.
It was by reason of my years that I
Was chosen to persuade your guest and bring
Him back to Thebes; not the delegate
Of one man, but commissioned by the State,
Since of all Thebans I have most bewailed,
Being his kinsman, his most grievous woes.
O listen to me, luckless Oedipus,
Come home! The whole Cadmeian people claim
With right to have thee back, I most of all,
For most of all (else were I vile indeed)
I mourn for thy misfortunes, seeing thee
An aged outcast, wandering on and on,
A beggar with one handmaid for thy stay.
Ah! who had e'er imagined she could fall
To such a depth of misery as this,
To tend in penury thy stricken frame,
A virgin ripe for wedlock, but unwed,
A prey for any wanton ravisher?
Seems it not cruel this reproach I cast
On thee and on myself and all the race?
Aye, but an open shame cannot be hid.
Hide it, O hide it, Oedipus, thou canst.
O, by our fathers' gods, consent I pray;
Come back to Thebes, come to thy father's home,
Bid Athens, as is meet, a fond farewell;
Thebes thy old foster-mother claims thee first.

OEDIPUS
O front of brass, thy subtle tongue would twist
To thy advantage every plea of right
Why try thy arts on me, why spread again
Toils where 'twould gall me sorest to be snared?

In old days when by self-wrought woes distraught,
I yearned for exile as a glad release,
Thy will refused the favor then I craved.
But when my frenzied grief had spent its force,
And I was fain to taste the sweets of home,
Then thou wouldst thrust me from my country, then
These ties of kindred were by thee ignored;
And now again when thou behold'st this State
And all its kindly people welcome me,
Thou seek'st to part us, wrapping in soft words
Hard thoughts. And yet what pleasure canst thou find
In forcing friendship on unwilling foes?
Suppose a man refused to grant some boon
When you importuned him, and afterwards
When you had got your heart's desire, consented,
Granting a grace from which all grace had fled,
Would not such favor seem an empty boon?
Yet such the boon thou profferest now to me,
Fair in appearance, but when tested false.
Yea, I will proved thee false, that these may hear;
Thou art come to take me, not to take me home,
But plant me on thy borders, that thy State
May so escape annoyance from this land.
That thou shalt never gain, but *this* instead —
My ghost to haunt thy country without end;
And for my sons, this heritage — no more —
Just room to die in. Have not I more skill
Than thou to draw the horoscope of Thebes?
Are not my teachers surer guides than thine —
Great Phoebus and the sire of Phoebus, Zeus?
Thou art a messenger suborned, thy tongue
Is sharper than a sword's edge, yet thy speech
Will bring thee more defeats than victories.
Howbeit, I know I waste my words — begone,
And leave me here; whate'er may be my lot,
He lives not ill who lives withal content.

CREON
Which loses in this parley, I o'erthrown

By thee, or thou who overthrow’st thyself?

OEDIPUS
I shall be well contented if thy suit
Fails with these strangers, as it has with me.

CREON
Unhappy man, will years ne’er make thee wise?
Must thou live on to cast a slur on age?

OEDIPUS
Thou hast a glib tongue, but no honest man,
Methinks, can argue well on any side.

CREON
’Tis one thing to speak much, another well.

OEDIPUS
Thy words, forsooth, are few and all well aimed!

CREON
Not for a man indeed with wits like thine.

OEDIPUS
Depart! I bid thee in these burghers’ name,
And prowl no longer round me to blockade
My destined harbor.

CREON
  I protest to these,
Not thee, and for thine answer to thy kin,
If e’er I take thee —

OEDIPUS
  Who against their will
Could take me?

CREON
  Though untaken thou shalt smart.

OEDIPUS
What power hast thou to execute this threat?

CREON
One of thy daughters is already seized,
The other I will carry off anon.

OEDIPUS
Woe, woe!

CREON
This is but prelude to thy woes.

OEDIPUS
Hast thou my child?

CREON
And soon shall have the other.

OEDIPUS
Ho, friends! ye will not surely play me false?
Chase this ungodly villain from your land.

CHORUS
Hence, stranger, hence avaunt! Thou doest wrong
In this, and wrong in all that thou hast done.

CREON (to his guards)
'Tis time by force to carry off the girl,
If she refuse of her free will to go.

ANTIGONE
Ah, woe is me! where shall I fly, where find
Succor from gods or men?

CHORUS
What would'st thou, stranger?

CREON
I meddle not with him, but her who is mine.

OEDIPUS
O princes of the land!

CHORUS

Sir, thou dost wrong.

CREON
Nay, right.

CHORUS
How right?

CREON
I take but what is mine.

OEDIPUS
Help, Athens!

CHORUS
What means this, sirrah? quick unhand her, or
We'll fight it out.

CREON
Back!

CHORUS
Not till thou forbear.

CREON
'Tis war with Thebes if I am touched or harmed.

OEDIPUS
Did I not warn thee?

CHORUS
Quick, unhand the maid!

CREON
Command your minions; I am not your slave.

CHORUS
Desist, I bid thee.

CREON (to the guard)
And O bid thee march!

CHORUS

To the rescue, one and all!
Rally, neighbors to my call!
See, the foe is at the gate!
Rally to defend the State.

ANTIGONE
Ah, woe is me, they drag me hence, O friends.

OEDIPUS
Where art thou, daughter?

ANTIGONE
Haled along by force.

OEDIPUS
Thy hands, my child!

ANTIGONE
They will not let me, father.

CREON
Away with her!

OEDIPUS
Ah, woe is me, ah woe!

CREON
So those two crutches shall no longer serve thee
For further roaming. Since it pleaseth thee
To triumph o'er thy country and thy friends
Who mandate, though a prince, I here discharge,
Enjoy thy triumph; soon or late thou'lt find
Thou art an enemy to thyself, both now
And in time past, when in despite of friends
Thou gav'st the rein to passion, still thy bane.

CHORUS
Hold there, sir stranger!

CREON
Hands off, have a care.

CHORUS
Restore the maidens, else thou goest not.

CREON
Then Thebes will take a dearer surety soon;
I will lay hands on more than these two maids.

CHORUS
What canst thou further?

CREON
Carry off this man.

CHORUS
Brave words!

CREON
And deeds forthwith shall make them good.

CHORUS
Unless perchance our sovereign intervene.

OEDIPUS
O shameless voice! Would’st lay an hand on me?

CREON
Silence, I bid thee!

OEDIPUS
Goddesses, allow
Thy suppliant to utter yet one curse!
Wretch, now my eyes are gone thou hast torn away
The helpless maiden who was eyes to me;
For these to thee and all thy cursed race
May the great Sun, whose eye is everywhere,
Grant length of days and old age like to mine.

CREON
Listen, O men of Athens, mark ye this?

OEDIPUS
They mark us both and understand that I

Wronged by the deeds defend myself with words.

CREON
Nothing shall curb my will; though I be old
And single-handed, I will have this man.

OEDIPUS
O woe is me!

CHORUS
Thou art a bold man, stranger, if thou think’st
To execute thy purpose.

CREON
So I do.

CHORUS
Then shall I deem this State no more a State.

CREON
With a just quarrel weakness conquers might.

OEDIPUS
Ye hear his words?

CHORUS
Aye words, but not yet deeds,
Zeus knoweth!

CREON
Zeus may haply know, not thou.

CHORUS
Insolence!

CREON
Insolence that thou must bear.

CHORUS
Haste ye princes, sound the alarm!
Men of Athens, arm ye, arm!
Quickly to the rescue come

Ere the robbers get them home.
[Enter THESEUS]

THESEUS
Why this outcry? What is forward? wherefore was I called away
From the altar of Poseidon, lord of your Colonus? Say!
On what errand have I hurried hither without stop or stay.

OEDIPUS
Dear friend — those accents tell me who thou art —
Yon man but now hath done me a foul wrong.

THESEUS
What is this wrong and who hath wrought it? Speak.

OEDIPUS
Creon who stands before thee. He it is
Hath robbed me of my all, my daughters twain.

THESEUS
What means this?

OEDIPUS
Thou hast heard my tale of wrongs.

THESEUS
Ho! hasten to the altars, one of you.
Command my liegemen leave the sacrifice
And hurry, foot and horse, with rein unchecked,
To where the paths that packmen use diverge,
Lest the two maidens slip away, and I
Become a mockery to this my guest,
As one despoiled by force. Quick, as I bid.
As for this stranger, had I let my rage,
Justly provoked, have play, he had not ‘scaped
Scathless and uncorrected at my hands.
But now the laws to which himself appealed,
These and none others shall adjudicate.
Thou shalt not quit this land, till thou hast fetched
The maidens and produced them in my sight.
Thou hast offended both against myself

And thine own race and country. Having come
Unto a State that champions right and asks
For every action warranty of law,
Thou hast set aside the custom of the land,
And like some freebooter art carrying off
What plunder pleases thee, as if forsooth
Thou thoughtest this a city without men,
Or manned by slaves, and me a thing of naught.
Yet not from Thebes this villainy was learnt;
Thebes is not wont to breed unrighteous sons,
Nor would she praise thee, if she learnt that thou
Wert robbing me — aye and the gods to boot,
Haling by force their suppliants, poor maids.
Were I on Theban soil, to prosecute
The justest claim imaginable, I
Would never wrest by violence my own
Without sanction of your State or King;
I should behave as fits an outlander
Living amongst a foreign folk, but thou
Shamest a city that deserves it not,
Even thine own, and plentitude of years
Have made of thee an old man and a fool.
Therefore again I charge thee as before,
See that the maidens are restored at once,
Unless thou would’st continue here by force
And not by choice a sojourner; so much
I tell thee home and what I say, I mean.

CHORUS
Thy case is perilous; though by birth and race
Thou should’st be just, thou plainly doest wrong.

CREON
Not deeming this city void of men
Or counsel, son of Aegeus, as thou say’st
I did what I have done; rather I thought
Your people were not like to set such store
by kin of mine and keep them ‘gainst my will.
Nor would they harbor, so I stood assured,

A godless parricide, a reprobate
Convicted of incestuous marriage ties.
For on her native hill of Ares here
(I knew your far-famed Areopagus)
Sits Justice, and permits not vagrant folk
To stay within your borders. In that faith
I hunted down my quarry; and e'en then
I had refrained but for the curses dire
Wherewith he banned my kinsfolk and myself:
Such wrong, methought, had warrant for my act.
Anger has no old age but only death;
The dead alone can feel no touch of spite.
So thou must work thy will; my cause is just
But weak without allies; yet will I try,
Old as I am, to answer deeds with deeds.

OEDIPUS
O shameless railer, think'st thou this abuse
Defames my grey hairs rather than thine own?
Murder and incest, deeds of horror, all
Thou blurtest forth against me, all I have borne,
No willing sinner; so it pleased the gods
Wrath haply with my sinful race of old,
Since thou could'st find no sin in me myself
For which in retribution I was doomed
To trespass thus against myself and mine.
Answer me now, if by some oracle
My sire was destined to a bloody end
By a son's hand, can this reflect on me,
Me then unborn, begotten by no sire,
Conceived in no mother's womb? And if
When born to misery, as born I was,
I met my sire, not knowing whom I met
or what I did, and slew him, how canst thou
With justice blame the all-unconscious hand?
And for my mother, wretch, art not ashamed,
Seeing she was thy sister, to extort
From me the story of her marriage, such
A marriage as I straightway will proclaim.

For I will speak; thy lewd and impious speech
Has broken all the bonds of reticence.
She was, ah woe is me! she was my mother;
I knew it not, nor she; and she my mother
Bare children to the son whom she had borne,
A birth of shame. But this at least I know
Wittingly thou aspersest her and me;
But I unwitting wed, unwilling speak.
Nay neither in this marriage or this deed
Which thou art ever casting in my teeth —
A murdered sire — shall I be held to blame.
Come, answer me one question, if thou canst:
If one should presently attempt thy life,
Would'st thou, O man of justice, first inquire
If the assassin was perchance thy sire,
Or turn upon him? As thou lov'st thy life,
On thy aggressor thou would'st turn, no stay
Debating, if the law would bear thee out.
Such was my case, and such the pass whereto
The gods reduced me; and methinks my sire,
Could he come back to life, would not dissent.
Yet thou, for just thou art not, but a man
Who sticks at nothing, if it serve his plea,
Reproachest me with this before these men.
It serves thy turn to laud great Theseus' name,
And Athens as a wisely governed State;
Yet in thy flatteries one thing is to seek:
If any land knows how to pay the gods
Their proper rites, 'tis Athens most of all.
This is the land whence thou wast fain to steal
Their aged suppliant and hast carried off
My daughters. Therefore to yon goddesses,
I turn, adjure them and invoke their aid
To champion my cause, that thou mayest learn
What is the breed of men who guard this State.

CHORUS
An honest man, my liege, one sore bestead
By fortune, and so worthy our support.

THESEUS
Enough of words; the captors speed amain,
While we the victims stand debating here.

CREON
What would'st thou? What can I, a feeble man?

THESEUS
Show us the trail, and I'll attend thee too,
That, if thou hast the maidens hereabouts,
Thou mayest thyself discover them to me;
But if thy guards outstrip us with their spoil,
We may draw rein; for others speed, from whom
They will not 'scape to thank the gods at home.
Lead on, I say, the captor's caught, and fate
Hath ta'en the fowler in the toils he spread;
So soon are lost gains gotten by deceit.
And look not for allies; I know indeed
Such height of insolence was never reached
Without abettors or accomplices;
Thou hast some backer in thy bold essay,
But I will search this matter home and see
One man doth not prevail against the State.
Dost take my drift, or seem these words as vain
As seemed our warnings when the plot was hatched?

CREON
Nothing thou sayest can I here dispute,
But once at home I too shall act my part.

THESEUS
Threaten us and — begone! Thou, Oedipus,
Stay here assured that nothing save my death
Will stay my purpose to restore the maids.

OEDIPUS
Heaven bless thee, Theseus, for thy nobleness
And all thy loving care in my behalf.
[Exeunt THESEUS and CREON]

CHORUS

(Str. 1)

O when the flying foe,
Turning at last to bay,
Soon will give blow for blow,
Might I behold the fray;
Hear the loud battle roar
Swell, on the Pythian shore,
Or by the torch-lit bay,
Where the dread Queen and Maid
Cherish the mystic rites,
Rites they to none betray,
Ere on his lips is laid
Secrecy's golden key
By their own acolytes,
Priestly Eumolpidae.

There I might chance behold
Theseus our captain bold
Meet with the robber band,
Ere they have fled the land,
Rescue by might and main
Maidens, the captives twain.

(Ant. 1)

Haply on swiftest steed,
Or in the flying car,
Now they approach the glen,
West of white Oea's scaur.
They will be vanquished:
Dread are our warriors, dread
Theseus our chieftain's men.
Flashes each bridle bright,
Charges each gallant knight,
All that our Queen adore,
Pallas their patron, or
Him whose wide floods enring
Earth, the great Ocean-king
Whom Rhea bore.

(Str. 2)
Fight they or now prepare
To fight? a vision rare
Tells me that soon again
I shall behold the twain
Maidens so ill bestead,
By their kin buffeted.
Today, today Zeus worketh some great thing
This day shall victory bring.
O for the wings, the wings of a dove,
To be borne with the speed of the gale,
Up and still upwards to sail
And gaze on the fray from the clouds above.
(Ant. 2)
All-seeing Zeus, O lord of heaven,
To our guardian host be given
Might triumphant to surprise
Flying foes and win their prize.
Hear us, Zeus, and hear us, child
Of Zeus, Athene undefiled,
Hear, Apollo, hunter, hear,
Huntress, sister of Apollo,
Who the dappled swift-foot deer
O'er the wooded glade dost follow;
Help with your two-fold power
Athens in danger's hour!
O wayfarer, thou wilt not have to tax
The friends who watch for thee with false presage,
For lo, an escort with the maids draws near.
[Enter ANTIGONE and ISMENE with THESEUS]

OEDIPUS
Where, where? what sayest thou?

ANTIGONE
O father, father,
Would that some god might grant thee eyes to see
This best of men who brings us back again.

OEDIPUS

My child! and are ye back indeed!

ANTIGONE
Yes, saved
By Theseus and his gallant followers.

OEDIPUS
Come to your father's arms, O let me feel
A child's embrace I never hoped for more.

ANTIGONE
Thou askest what is doubly sweet to give.

OEDIPUS
Where are ye then?

ANTIGONE
We come together both.

OEDIPUS
My precious nurslings!

ANTIGONE
Fathers aye were fond.

OEDIPUS
Props of my age!

ANTIGONE
So sorrow sorrow props.

OEDIPUS
I have my darlings, and if death should come,
Death were not wholly bitter with you near.
Cling to me, press me close on either side,
There rest ye from your dreary wayfaring.
Now tell me of your ventures, but in brief;
Brief speech suffices for young maids like you.

ANTIGONE
Here is our savior; thou should'st hear the tale
From his own lips; so shall my part be brief.

OEDIPUS
I pray thee do not wonder if the sight
Of children, given o'er for lost, has made
My converse somewhat long and tedious.
Full well I know the joy I have of them
Is due to thee, to thee and no man else;
Thou wast their sole deliverer, none else.
The gods deal with thee after my desire,
With thee and with this land! for fear of heaven
I found above all peoples most with you,
And righteousness and lips that cannot lie.
I speak in gratitude of what I know,
For all I have I owe to thee alone.
Give me thy hand, O Prince, that I may touch it,
And if thou wilt permit me, kiss thy cheek.
What say I? Can I wish that thou should'st touch
One fallen like me to utter wretchedness,
Corrupt and tainted with a thousand ills?
Oh no, I would not let thee if thou would'st.
They only who have known calamity
Can share it. Let me greet thee where thou art,
And still befriend me as thou hast till now.

THESEUS
I marvel not if thou hast dallied long
In converse with thy children and preferred
Their speech to mine; I feel no jealousy,
I would be famous more by deeds than words.
Of this, old friend, thou hast had proof; my oath
I have fulfilled and brought thee back the maids
Alive and nothing harmed for all those threats.
And how the fight was won, 'twere waste of words
To boast — thy daughters here will tell thee all.
But of a matter that has lately chanced
On my way hitherward, I fain would have
Thy counsel — slight 'twould seem, yet worthy thought.
A wise man heeds all matters great or small.

OEDIPUS

What is it, son of Aegeus? Let me hear.
Of what thou askest I myself know naught.

THESEUS
’Tis said a man, no countryman of thine,
But of thy kin, hath taken sanctuary
Beside the altar of Poseidon, where
I was at sacrifice when called away.

OEDIPUS
What is his country? what the suitor’s prayer?

THESEUS
I know but one thing; he implores, I am told,
A word with thee — he will not trouble thee.

OEDIPUS
What seeks he? If a suppliant, something grave.

THESEUS
He only waits, they say, to speak with thee,
And then unharmed to go upon his way.

OEDIPUS
I marvel who is this petitioner.

THESEUS
Think if there be not any of thy kin
At Argos who might claim this boon of thee.

OEDIPUS
Dear friend, forbear, I pray.

THESEUS
What ails thee now?

OEDIPUS
Ask it not of me.

THESEUS
Ask not what? explain.

OEDIPUS
Thy words have told me who the suppliant is.

THESEUS
Who can he be that I should frown on him?

OEDIPUS
My son, O king, my hateful son, whose words
Of all men's most would jar upon my ears.

THESEUS
Thou sure mightest listen. If his suit offend,
No need to grant it. Why so loth to hear him?

OEDIPUS
That voice, O king, grates on a father's ears;
I have come to loathe it. Force me not to yield.

THESEUS
But he hath found asylum. O beware,
And fail not in due reverence to the god.

ANTIGONE
O heed me, father, though I am young in years.
Let the prince have his will and pay withal
What in his eyes is service to the god;
For our sake also let our brother come.
If what he urges tend not to thy good
He cannot surely wrest perforce thy will.
To hear him then, what harm? By open words
A scheme of villainy is soon bewrayed.
Thou art his father, therefore canst not pay
In kind a son's most impious outrages.
O listen to him; other men like thee
Have thankless children and are choleric,
But yielding to persuasion's gentle spell
They let their savage mood be exorcised.
Look thou to the past, forget the present, think
On all the woe thy sire and mother brought thee;
Thence wilt thou draw this lesson without fail,

Of evil passion evil is the end.
Thou hast, alas, to prick thy memory,
Stern monitors, these ever-sightless orbs.
O yield to us; just suitors should not need
To be importunate, nor he that takes
A favor lack the grace to make return.

OEDIPUS
Grievous to me, my child, the boon ye win
By pleading. Let it be then; have your way
Only if come he must, I beg thee, friend,
Let none have power to dispose of me.

THESEUS
No need, Sir, to appeal a second time.
It likes me not to boast, but be assured
Thy life is safe while any god saves mine.
[Exit THESEUS]

CHORUS
(Str.)
Who craves excess of days,
Scorning the common span
Of life, I judge that man
A giddy wight who walks in folly's ways.
For the long years heap up a grievous load,
Scant pleasures, heavier pains,
Till not one joy remains
For him who lingers on life's weary road
And come it slow or fast,
One doom of fate
Doth all await,
For dance and marriage bell,
The dirge and funeral knell.
Death the deliverer freeth all at last.
(Ant.)
Not to be born at all
Is best, far best that can befall,
Next best, when born, with least delay
To trace the backward way.

For when youth passes with its giddy train,
Troubles on troubles follow, toils on toils,
Pain, pain for ever pain;
And none escapes life’s coils.
Envy, sedition, strife,
Carnage and war, make up the tale of life.
Last comes the worst and most abhorred stage
Of unregarded age,
Joyless, companionless and slow,
Of woes the crowning woe.

(Epode)
Such ills not I alone,
He too our guest hath known,
E’en as some headland on an iron-bound shore,
Lashed by the wintry blasts and surge’s roar,
So is he buffeted on every side
By drear misfortune’s whelming tide,
By every wind of heaven o’erborne
Some from the sunset, some from orient morn,
Some from the noonday glow.
Some from Rhipean gloom of everlasting snow.

ANTIGONE
Father, methinks I see the stranger coming,
Alone he comes and weeping plenteous tears.

OEDIPUS
Who may he be?

ANTIGONE
The same that we surmised.
From the outset — Polyneices. He is here.
[Enter POLYNEICES]

POLYNEICES
Ah me, my sisters, shall I first lament
My own afflictions, or my aged sire’s,
Whom here I find a castaway, with you,
In a strange land, an ancient beggar clad

In antic tatters, marring all his frame,
While o'er the sightless orbs his unkept locks
Float in the breeze; and, as it were to match,
He bears a wallet against hunger's pinch.
All this too late I learn, wretch that I am,
Alas! I own it, and am proved most vile
In my neglect of thee: I scorn myself.
But as almighty Zeus in all he doth
Hath Mercy for co-partner of this throne,
Let Mercy, father, also sit enthroned
In thy heart likewise. For transgressions past
May be amended, cannot be made worse.

Why silent? Father, speak, nor turn away,
Hast thou no word, wilt thou dismiss me then
In mute disdain, nor tell me why thou art wrath?
O ye his daughters, sisters mine, do ye
This sullen, obstinate silence try to move.
Let him not spurn, without a single word
Of answer, me the suppliant of the god.

ANTIGONE
Tell him thyself, unhappy one, thine errand;
For large discourse may send a thrill of joy,
Or stir a chord of wrath or tenderness,
And to the tongue-tied somehow give a tongue.

POLYNEICES
Well dost thou counsel, and I will speak out.
First will I call in aid the god himself,
Poseidon, from whose altar I was raised,
With warrant from the monarch of this land,
To parley with you, and depart unscathed.
These pledges, strangers, I would see observed
By you and by my sisters and my sire.
Now, father, let me tell thee why I came.
I have been banished from my native land
Because by right of primogeniture
I claimed possession of thy sovereign throne
Wherefrom Etocles, my younger brother,

Ousted me, not by weight of precedent,
Nor by the last arbitrament of war,
But by his popular acts; and the prime cause
Of this I deem the curse that rests on thee.
So likewise hold the soothsayers, for when
I came to Argos in the Dorian land
And took the king Adrastus' child to wife,
Under my standard I enlisted all
The foremost captains of the Apian isle,
To levy with their aid that sevenfold host
Of spearmen against Thebes, determining
To oust my foes or die in a just cause.
Why then, thou askest, am I here today?
Father, I come a suppliant to thee
Both for myself and my allies who now
With squadrons seven beneath their seven spears
Beleaguer all the plain that circles Thebes.
Foremost the peerless warrior, peerless seer,
Amphiaraiis with his lightning lance;
Next an Aetolian, Tydeus, Oeneus' son;
Eteoclus of Argive birth the third;
The fourth Hippomedon, sent to the war
By his sire Talaos; Capaneus, the fifth,
Vaunts he will fire and raze the town; the sixth
Parthenopaeus, an Arcadian born
Named of that maid, longtime a maid and late
Espoused, Atalanta's true-born child;
Last I thy son, or thine at least in name,
If but the bastard of an evil fate,
Lead against Thebes the fearless Argive host.
Thus by thy children and thy life, my sire,
We all adjure thee to remit thy wrath
And favor one who seeks a just revenge
Against a brother who has banned and robbed him.
For victory, if oracles speak true,
Will fall to those who have thee for ally.
So, by our fountains and familiar gods
I pray thee, yield and hear; a beggar I
And exile, thou an exile likewise; both

Involved in one misfortune find a home
As pensioners, while he, the lord of Thebes,
O agony! makes a mock of thee and me.
I'll scatter with a breath the upstart's might,
And bring thee home again and stablish thee,
And stablish, having cast him out, myself.
This will thy goodwill I will undertake,
Without it I can scare return alive.

CHORUS
For the king's sake who sent him, Oedipus,
Dismiss him not without a meet reply.

OEDIPUS
Nay, worthy seniors, but for Theseus' sake
Who sent him hither to have word of me.
Never again would he have heard my voice;
But now he shall obtain this parting grace,
An answer that will bring him little joy.
O villain, when thou hadst the sovereignty
That now thy brother holdeth in thy stead,
Didst thou not drive me, thine own father, out,
An exile, cityless, and make we wear
This beggar's garb thou weepest to behold,
Now thou art come thyself to my sad plight?
Nothing is here for tears; it must be borne
By *me* till death, and I shall think of thee
As of my murderer; thou didst thrust me out;
'Tis thou hast made me conversant with woe,
Through thee I beg my bread in a strange land;
And had not these my daughters tended me
I had been dead for aught of aid from thee.
They tend me, they preserve me, they are men
Not women in true service to their sire;
But ye are bastards, and no sons of mine.
Therefore just Heaven hath an eye on thee;
Howbeit not yet with aspect so austere
As thou shalt soon experience, if indeed
These banded hosts are moving against Thebes.

That city thou canst never storm, but first
Shall fall, thou and thy brother, blood-imbrued.
Such curse I lately launched against you twain,
Such curse I now invoke to fight for me,
That ye may learn to honor those who bear thee
Nor flout a sightless father who begat
Degenerate sons — these maidens did not so.
Therefore my curse is stronger than thy "throne,"
Thy "suppliance," if by right of laws eterne
Primeval Justice sits enthroned with Zeus.
Begone, abhorred, disowned, no son of mine,
Thou vilest of the vile! and take with thee
This curse I leave thee as my last bequest: —
Never to win by arms thy native land,
No, nor return to Argos in the Vale,
But by a kinsman's hand to die and slay
Him who expelled thee. So I pray and call
On the ancestral gloom of Tartarus
To snatch thee hence, on these dread goddesses
I call, and Ares who incensed you both
To mortal enmity. Go now proclaim
What thou hast heard to the Cadmeians all,
Thy staunch confederates — this the heritage
that Oedipus divideth to his sons.

CHORUS
Thy errand, Polyneices, liked me not
From the beginning; now go back with speed.

POLYNEICES
Woe worth my journey and my baffled hopes!
Woe worth my comrades! What a desperate end
To that glad march from Argos! Woe is me!
I dare not whisper it to my allies
Or turn them back, but mute must meet my doom.
My sisters, ye his daughters, ye have heard
The prayers of our stern father, if his curse
Should come to pass and ye some day return
To Thebes, O then disown me not, I pray,

But grant me burial and due funeral rites.
So shall the praise your filial care now wins
Be doubled for the service wrought for me.

ANTIGONE
One boon, O Polyneices, let me crave.

POLYNEICES
What would'st thou, sweet Antigone? Say on.

ANTIGONE
Turn back thy host to Argos with all speed,
And ruin not thyself and Thebes as well.

POLYNEICES
That cannot be. How could I lead again
An army that had seen their leader quail?

ANTIGONE
But, brother, why shouldst thou be wroth again?
What profit from thy country's ruin comes?

POLYNEICES
'Tis shame to live in exile, and shall I
The elder bear a younger brother's flouts?

ANTIGONE
Wilt thou then bring to pass his prophecies
Who threatens mutual slaughter to you both?

POLYNEICES
Aye, so he wishes: — but I must not yield.

ANTIGONE
O woe is me! but say, will any dare,
Hearing his prophecy, to follow thee?

POLYNEICES
I shall not tell it; a good general
Reports successes and conceals mishaps.

ANTIGONE

Misguided youth, thy purpose then stands fast!

POLYNEICES
’Tis so, and stay me not. The road I choose,
Dogged by my sire and his avenging spirit,
Leads me to ruin; but for you may Zeus
Make your path bright if ye fulfill my hest
When dead; in life ye cannot serve me more.
Now let me go, farewell, a long farewell!
Ye ne’er shall see my living face again.

ANTIGONE
Ah me!

POLYNEICES
Bewail me not.

ANTIGONE
Who would not mourn
Thee, brother, hurrying to an open pit!

POLYNEICES
If I must die, I must.

ANTIGONE
Nay, hear me plead.

POLYNEICES
It may not be; forbear.

ANTIGONE
Then woe is me,
If I must lose thee.

POLYNEICES
Nay, that rests with fate,
Whether I live or die; but for you both
I pray to heaven ye may escape all ill;
For ye are blameless in the eyes of all.
[Exit POLYNEICES]

CHORUS

(Str. 1)
Ills on ills! no pause or rest!
Come they from our sightless guest?
Or haply now we see fulfilled
What fate long time hath willed?
For ne'er have I proved vain
Aught that the heavenly powers ordain.
Time with never sleeping eye
Watches what is writ on high,
Overthrowing now the great,
Raising now from low estate.
Hark! How the thunder rumbles! Zeus defend us!

OEDIPUS
Children, my children! will no messenger
Go summon hither Theseus my best friend?

ANTIGONE
And wherefore, father, dost thou summon him?

OEDIPUS
This winged thunder of the god must bear me
Anon to Hades. Send and tarry not.

CHORUS
(Ant. 1)
Hark! with louder, nearer roar
The bolt of Zeus descends once more.
My spirit quails and cowers: my hair
Bristles for fear. Again that flare!
What doth the lightning-flash portend?
Ever it points to issues grave.
Dread powers of air! Save, Zeus, O save!

OEDIPUS
Daughters, upon me the predestined end
Has come; no turning from it any more.

ANTIGONE
How knowest thou? What sign convinces thee?

OEDIPUS
I know full well. Let some one with all speed
Go summon hither the Athenian prince.

CHORUS
(Str. 2)
Ha! once more the deafening sound
Peals yet louder all around
If thou darkenest our land,
Lightly, lightly lay thy hand;
Grace, not anger, let me win,
If upon a man of sin
I have looked with pitying eye,
Zeus, our king, to thee I cry!

OEDIPUS
Is the prince coming? Will he when he comes
Find me yet living and my senses clear!

ANTIGONE
What solemn charge would'st thou impress on him?

OEDIPUS
For all his benefits I would perform
The promise made when I received them first.

CHORUS
(Ant. 2)
Hither haste, my son, arise,
Altar leave and sacrifice,
If haply to Poseidon now
In the far glade thou pay'st thy vow.
For our guest to thee would bring
And thy folk and offering,
Thy due guerdon. Haste, O King!
[Enter THESEUS]

THESEUS
Wherefore again this general din? at once
My people call me and the stranger calls.

Is it a thunderbolt of Zeus or sleet
Of arrowy hail? a storm so fierce as this
Would warrant all surmises of mischance.

OEDIPUS
Thou com'st much wished for, Prince, and sure some god
Hath bid good luck attend thee on thy way.

THESEUS
What, son of Laius, hath chanced of new?

OEDIPUS
My life hath turned the scale. I would do all
I promised thee and thine before I die.

THESEUS
What sign assures thee that thine end is near?

OEDIPUS
The gods themselves are heralds of my fate;
Of their appointed warnings nothing fails.

THESEUS
How sayest thou they signify their will?

OEDIPUS
This thunder, peal on peal, this lightning hurled
Flash upon flash, from the unconquered hand.

THESEUS
I must believe thee, having found thee oft
A prophet true; then speak what must be done.

OEDIPUS
O son of Aegeus, for this state will I
Unfold a treasure age cannot corrupt.
Myself anon without a guiding hand
Will take thee to the spot where I must end.
This secret ne'er reveal to mortal man,
Neither the spot nor whereabouts it lies,
So shall it ever serve thee for defense

Better than native shields and near allies.
But those dread mysteries speech may not profane
Thyself shalt gather coming there alone;
Since not to any of thy subjects, nor
To my own children, though I love them dearly,
Can I reveal what thou must guard alone,
And whisper to thy chosen heir alone,
So to be handed down from heir to heir.
Thus shalt thou hold this land inviolate
From the dread Dragon's brood. 7 The justest State
By countless wanton neighbors may be wronged,
For the gods, though they tarry, mark for doom
The godless sinner in his mad career.
Far from thee, son of Aegeus, be such fate!
But to the spot — the god within me goads —
Let us set forth no longer hesitate.
Follow me, daughters, this way. Strange that I
Whom you have led so long should lead you now.
Oh, touch me not, but let me all alone
Find out the sepulcher that destiny
Appoints me in this land. Hither, this way,
For this way Hermes leads, the spirit guide,
And Persephassa, empress of the dead.
O light, no light to me, but mine erewhile,
Now the last time I feel thee palpable,
For I am drawing near the final gloom
Of Hades. Blessing on thee, dearest friend,
On thee and on thy land and followers!
Live prosperous and in your happy state
Still for your welfare think on me, the dead.
[Exit THESEUS followed by ANTIGONE and ISMENE]

CHORUS
(Str.)
If mortal prayers are heard in hell,
Hear, Goddess dread, invisible!
Monarch of the regions drear,
Aidoneus, hear, O hear!
By a gentle, tearless doom

Speed this stranger to the gloom,
Let him enter without pain
The all-shrouding Stygian plain.
Wrongfully in life oppressed,
Be he now by Justice blessed.

(Ant.)
Queen infernal, and thou fell
Watch-dog of the gates of hell,
Who, as legends tell, dost glare,
Gnarling in thy cavernous lair
At all comers, let him go
Scathless to the fields below.
For thy master orders thus,
The son of earth and Tartarus;
In his den the monster keep,
Giver of eternal sleep.
[Enter MESSENGER]

MESSENGER
Friends, countrymen, my tidings are in sum
That Oedipus is gone, but the event
Was not so brief, nor can the tale be brief.

CHORUS
What, has he gone, the unhappy man?

MESSENGER
Know well
That he has passed away from life to death.

CHORUS
How? By a godsent, painless doom, poor soul?

MESSENGER
Thy question hits the marvel of the tale.
How he moved hence, you saw him and must know;
Without a friend to lead the way, himself
Guiding us all. So having reached the abrupt
Earth-rooted Threshold with its brazen stairs,

He paused at one of the converging paths,
Hard by the rocky basin which records
The pact of Theseus and Peirithous.
Betwixt that rift and the Thorician rock,
The hollow pear-tree and the marble tomb,
Midway he sat and loosed his beggar's weeds;
Then calling to his daughters bade them fetch
Of running water, both to wash withal
And make libation; so they clomb the steep;
And in brief space brought what their father bade,
Then laved and dressed him with observance due.
But when he had his will in everything,
And no desire was left unsatisfied,
It thundered from the netherworld; the maids
Shivered, and crouching at their father's knees
Wept, beat their breast and uttered a long wail.
He, as he heard their sudden bitter cry,
Folded his arms about them both and said,
"My children, ye will lose your sire today,
For all of me has perished, and no more
Have ye to bear your long, long ministry;
A heavy load, I know, and yet one word
Wipes out all score of tribulations — *love*.
And love from me ye had — from no man more;
But now must live without me all your days."
So clinging to each other sobbed and wept
Father and daughters both, but when at last
Their mourning had an end and no wail rose,
A moment there was silence; suddenly
A voice that summoned him; with sudden dread
The hair of all stood up and all were 'mazed;
For the call came, now loud, now low, and oft.
"Oedipus, Oedipus, why tarry we?
Too long, too long thy passing is delayed."
But when he heard the summons of the god,
He prayed that Theseus might be brought, and when
The Prince came nearer: "O my friend," he cried,
"Pledge ye my daughters, giving thy right hand —
And, daughters, give him yours — and promise me

Thou never wilt forsake them, but do all
That time and friendship prompt in their behoof."
And he of his nobility repressed
His tears and swore to be their constant friend.
This promise given, Oedipus put forth
Blind hands and laid them on his children, saying,
"O children, prove your true nobility
And hence depart nor seek to witness sights
Unlawful or to hear unlawful words.
Nay, go with speed; let none but Theseus stay,
Our ruler, to behold what next shall hap."
So we all heard him speak, and weeping sore
We companied the maidens on their way.
After brief space we looked again, and lo
The man was gone, evanished from our eyes;
Only the king we saw with upraised hand
Shading his eyes as from some awful sight,
That no man might endure to look upon.
A moment later, and we saw him bend
In prayer to Earth and prayer to Heaven at once.
But by what doom the stranger met his end
No man save Theseus knoweth. For there fell
No fiery bold that reft him in that hour,
Nor whirlwind from the sea, but he was taken.
It was a messenger from heaven, or else
Some gentle, painless cleaving of earth's base;
For without wailing or disease or pain
He passed away — and end most marvelous.
And if to some my tale seems foolishness
I am content that such could count me fool.

CHORUS
Where are the maids and their attendant friends?

MESSENGER
They cannot be far off; the approaching sound
Of lamentation tells they come this way.
[Enter ANTIGONE and ISMENE]

ANTIGONE

(Str. 1)
Woe, woe! on this sad day
We sisters of one blasted stock
must bow beneath the shock,
Must weep and weep the curse that lay
On him our sire, for whom
In life, a life-long world of care
'Twas ours to bear,
In death must face the gloom
That wraps his tomb.
What tongue can tell
That sight ineffable?

CHORUS
What mean ye, maidens?

ANTIGONE
All is but surmise.

CHORUS
Is he then gone?

ANTIGONE
Gone as ye most might wish.
Not in battle or sea storm,
But reft from sight,
By hands invisible borne
To viewless fields of night.
Ah me! on us too night has come,
The night of mourning. Wither roam
O'er land or sea in our distress
Eating the bread of bitterness?

ISMENE
I know not. O that Death
Might nip my breath,
And let me share my aged father's fate.
I cannot live a life thus desolate.

CHORUS

Best of daughters, worthy pair,
What heaven brings ye needs must bear,
Fret no more ‘gainst Heaven’s will;
Fate hath dealt with you not ill.

ANTIGONE
(Ant. 1)
Love can turn past pain to bliss,
   What seemed bitter now is sweet.
Ah me! that happy toil is sweet.
   The guidance of those dear blind feet.
Dear father, wrapt for aye in nether gloom,
   E’en in the tomb
Never shalt thou lack of love repine,
   Her love and mine.

CHORUS
His fate —

ANTIGONE
   Is even as he planned.

CHORUS
How so?

ANTIGONE
He died, so willed he, in a foreign land.
Lapped in kind earth he sleeps his long last sleep,
   And o’er his grave friends weep.
How great our lost these streaming eyes can tell,
   This sorrow naught can quell.
Thou hadst thy wish ‘mid strangers thus to die,
   But I, ah me, not by.

ISMENE
Alas, my sister, what new fate
* * * * * *
* * * * * *
Befalls us orphans desolate?

CHORUS

His end was blessed; therefore, children, stay
Your sorrow. Man is born to fate a prey.

ANTIGONE
(Str. 2)
Sister, let us back again.

ISMENE
Why return?

ANTIGONE
My soul is fain —
ISMENE
Is fain?

ANTIGONE
To see the earthy bed.

ISMENE
Sayest thou?

ANTIGONE
Where our sire is laid.

ISMENE
Nay, thou can’st not, dost not see —

ANTIGONE
Sister, wherefore wroth with me?

ISMENE
Know’st not — beside —

ANTIGONE
More must I hear?

ISMENE
Tombless he died, none near.

ANTIGONE
Lead me thither; slay me there.

ISMENE

How shall I unhappy fare,
Friendless, helpless, how drag on
A life of misery alone?

CHORUS
(Ant. 2)
Fear not, maids —

ANTIGONE
Ah, whither flee?

CHORUS
Refuge hath been found.

ANTIGONE
For me?

CHORUS
Where thou shalt be safe from harm.

ANTIGONE
I know it.

CHORUS
Why then this alarm?

ANTIGONE
How again to get us home
I know not.

CHORUS
Why then this roam?

ANTIGONE
Troubles whelm us —

CHORUS
As of yore.

ANTIGONE
Worse than what was worse before.

CHORUS

Sure ye are driven on the breakers' surge.

ANTIGONE
Alas! we are.

CHORUS
Alas! 'tis so.

ANTIGONE
Ah whither turn, O Zeus? No ray
Of hope to cheer the way
Whereon the fates our desperate voyage urge.
[Enter THESEUS]

THESEUS
Dry your tears; when grace is shed
On the quick and on the dead
By dark Powers beneficent,
Over-grief they would resent.

ANTIGONE
Aegeus' child, to thee we pray.

THESEUS
What the boon, my children, say.

ANTIGONE
With our own eyes we fain would see
Our father's tomb.

THESEUS
That may not be.

ANTIGONE
What say'st thou, King?

THESEUS
My children, he
Charged me straitly that no moral
Should approach the sacred portal,
Or greet with funeral litanies
The hidden tomb wherein he lies;

Saying, “If thou keep’st my hest
Thou shalt hold thy realm at rest.”
The God of Oaths this promise heard,
And to Zeus I pledged my word.

ANTIGONE
Well, if he would have it so,
We must yield. Then let us go
Back to Thebes, if yet we may
Heal this mortal feud and stay
The self-wrought doom
That drives our brothers to their tomb.

THESEUS
Go in peace; nor will I spare
Ought of toil and zealous care,
But on all your needs attend,
Gladdening in his grave my friend.

CHORUS
Wail no more, let sorrow rest,
All is ordered for the best.

FRAGMENTS

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TRACKERS

Translated by Arthur S Hunt

This play was written circa 460 B.C and only 400 lines have survived. *Trackers* is a satyr play, which was a type of burlesque or parody that playwrights staged after presenting their more serious tragedies. Satyr plays featured a chorus of eleven men dressed as satyrs. Only one stayr play survives complete, titled *Cyclops* and composed by Euripides. The plot of *Trackers* focuses on the exploits of Hermes, the winged messenger, a god renowned for theft, cunning, music and commerce. In the play, the chorus of eleven satyrs attempt to track down the cattle stolen by Hermes from the god Apollo. During their quest, Hermes charms them with an instrument of his own invention, a kithara (lyre).

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Hermes - wing-footed messenger of the gods
A chorus of satyrs (horned and lustful deities, with the upper body of a man and the lower of a goat. They are well known for their love of wine and depravity.

SCENE

There is a cave upstage centre (represented by the skene door).

Enter Apollo, right.

APOLLO
I, Apollo, proclaim to all gods and all mortal men : I shall give a golden basin to whoever can bring back my cattle from far away. It is quite unpleasant to me that they are gone, all of them: cows, calves, heifers. They are all gone, and I look in vain for their tracks, while they wander far from their own mangers. I never thought that any of the gods or of men, whose lives are like a single day, would dare do such a thing. Since I found out about this, shocked as I was, I have been seeking them, and I have proclaimed the deed so that no god or mortal men could be unaware of it. I am beside myself. I have gone to visit the whole nation of the Locrians, those who inhabit Opus, those in Ozolis, those in Knemis by the Cephisus. I have gone to Aetolia and to Acarnanian Argos. From there I came to the grove of Zeus at Dodona, shaded by leaves of prophecy. I then hastened to the fruitful plains of Thessaly and the wealthy cities of Boeotia. And then I came to Attica, to holy Athens, but I see my cows nowhere. Then I came to Dorian Argos and the nearby hill. From there I came, in one leap, to the Stymphalian Lake and Mount Cyllene, hard to climb. I speak to the forest: if any shepherd or any rustic or any charcoal-burner is here, or any saytr from the mountains, child of the river-nymphs, I announce these things to one and all. Whoever can capture the one who stole the cattle of Apollo Paean, his is the reward that stands here. Enter Silenus, left.

SILENUS
As soon as I heard you shouting your proclamation, I came as fast as an old man can, because I want to help you out, Phoebus Apollo, and perhaps I can hunt up your cattle. Then a messenger will announce my golden reward. I will tell my children to look carefully, if you really do mean to do what you’ve promised.

APOLLO
I will indeed; only confirm your promise.

SILENUS
I will bring you back your cattle; but you confirm the reward.

APOLLO
Whoever finds them will have it; it is ready at hand.

SILENUS
Seek!

APOLLO
Silenus.

SILENUS
What? What are you saying?

APOLLO
I say that you, and all the race of your children, will be free. Exit Apollo, right. Enter the chorus of satyrs, by the left parodos. They sing excitedly.

CHORUS
Come, come here, see if you can find the footprints of the lost cattle. Apapapay! Oh, oh, listen, I tell you! Get the thief! underground finish the job my old father. How can we find out the secret thefts in the night? if I did meet free life for my father. So may the dear god bring an end to my labors, as he has shown us the extraordinary excellence of his gold.

SILENUS (Speaking.)
Oh gods, Fortune and the god who leads in the straight way, grant me success as I race out to seek out the prey, the spoil, and the booty: the cattle stolen from Phoebus. If there is anyone who has seen them, or heard about them, he would become my friend by telling me, and he would help me to help lord Phoebus. But if someone does not tell what he knows, his reward will be the god’s disapproval.

CHORUS
Hey… and not.

SILENUS
Does anyone say, or does anyone know, where the cattle are? It seems that I

must begin the search. Come, all of you, track them by their scent, if there is any trace left anywhere. Bent over, crouching to the ground, be guided by the scent. Carry out your search this way and bring it to a worthy fulfilment. Exit Silenus. The satyrs divide into two groups and begin sniffing around the stage.

SEMI-CHORUS A
Oh god, oh god, oh god, oh god: aha! We seem to have it. Stand still, don't move.

SEMI-CHORUS B
There they are: the marks of the cattle.

SEMI-CHORUS A
Quiet! Some god is taking them to a new home.

SEMI-CHORUS B
What should we do, my friend? Do we have to get them out?

SEMI-CHORUS A
Why? Do you think they're in here?

SEMI-CHORUS B
Definitely. All the signs say so clearly.

SEMI-CHORUS A
Look! Here's the same hoof mark again.

SEMI-CHORUS B
Look at that! They measure out to exactly the same size.

SEMI-CHORUS A
Make way, and if you hear any sound from the cattle.

SEMI-CHORUS B
I don't yet hear their voices clearly. But these tracks and footprints are obviously those of the cattle.

SEMI-CHORUS A
Hey! As Zeus is my witness, the tracks turn around and go backward. Look at them. Why is that? Why would their line wheel around? The front is turned to the back, and they're all tangled up together. The cowherd must have been awfully confused.

SILENUS
What kind of a way to hunt is that, bent over and leaning down to the ground? Where are you going? I don't understand. You're lying there like a hedgehog fallen on the ground, or an ape sticking his head forward and having a temper tantrum. What's this? Where on earth did you learn this, and how? Tell me, because I certainly don't understand what you're doing.

CHORUS
Ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh! The chorus are still squealing as he starts to speak.

SILENUS
What are you "ooh-ooh"-ing for? What are you afraid of? What do you see? What frightful thing are you looking at? Why are you carrying on like bacchantes? Is there a hawk nearby? From offstage, we hear a lyre being tuned. Since the player is in fact Hermes, it sounds divine, but no mortal has ever heard this instrument before, and the satyrs are terrified. They abruptly stop squealing. Do you want to know what it was? Why are you so quiet, when you were just now babbling away?

CHORUS
Be quiet!

SILENUS
What is it over there that you're trying to get away from?

CHORUS
Listen!

SILENUS
I'll listen. He pauses for a moment, listening. But I don't hear any sound.

CHORUS
Do what I say!

SILENUS
No one is helping me with this hunt.

CHORUS
Listen just a moment, will you? When we went over there we were assaulted by a noise like no one ever heard before.

SILENUS

Why are you running away, afraid of a noise? You wretched beasts, with your filthy bodies all smeared with wax, seeing terrors in every shadow, scared of everything! You're gutless, and careless, and servile. You're nothing but body and tongue and voice. You trust to words and flee from actions. Worst of animals, how did you ever come to have a father like me? There are lots of monuments to my courage, when I was young, songs sung at every household's wedding feast. I was never put to flight, never afraid, and I didn't quiver at noises made by animals up on the mountains. Instead, I accomplished great things with my spear. That brilliant spear is now besmirched by you, because some new sound from the shepherds has frightened you, like the babies you are, and you've given up on the golden wealth that Phoebus said he was offering to you, to say nothing of freedom, which he also offered to you and to me. You've put all that away and gone to sleep. Unless you get back to work tracking those cows and their cowherd, wherever they are, you'll be making noises of your own for your cowardice.

CHORUS
Father, walk beside me, so you'll know whether I'm really a coward. If you're here, you'll know first hand, not through rumors.

SILENUS
I will approach this sound with you, and I will call out and whistle as I'd call a dog. You, line up three by three, and I will go beside you and get you straightened out again.

CHORUS
Perhaps separate satyrs sing the various lines of this song.
With Silenus, they approach the cave, upstage, jostling, confused, and squabbling. The lyre-noises resume.
Ooh, ooh, ooh, ssh, ssh, aah, aah! Say what you're working on.
Why did you shout and scream? It's pointless. And why were you suspicious of me? Who's holding back in our first task?
You are. He came, he came.
You are mine; lead the way.
This way, ho! Who is the ?
The dragon, the wrinkled one
Goddess of fair winds, you were beside me, drunk
Whatever bring set on top of it
the way which warlike
Follow me, this way! To the cows, to the task

so he doesn’t drop the saffron
You see something beautiful and the good lawful
Follow me
Oppopopoy! Hey, filthy polluted one! As soon as you get away from here, you’ll be set free and
But don’t get lost. Come on, straight ahead, this way. Now we’ve got the crook.
Father, why are you quiet? Isn’t what we’re saying true? Aren’t you listening?
Or are you deafened by the noise?

SILENUS
Shush! What is it?

CHORUS
I’m getting out of here!

SILENUS
Stay, if you can.

CHORUS
No way. But you go ahead: you keep looking and track down the cows, any way you want to, and take the gold unless the biggest time.

SILENUS
No, I won’t leave you, nor sneak away from the work, before we know for sure what’s going on in there.

CHORUS
Addressing the source of the noise
Hey! You in there! voice reward you will be happy at home.
To Silenus
He’s not coming out.
To the noise-maker again. But I’ll force you out, making the ground rumble with my swift leaps and kicks, so you’ll listen, even if you’re altogether deaf.
Cyllene emerges from the cave.

CYLLENE
Satyrs, why have you rushed up here making all this noise, on this mountain covered with green woods full of animals? Have you got yourselves a new job?
You used to bring joy to your master , who would put on a fawn skin and carry a thyrsus in his hands. You would dance around the god shouting “Evoe,” along with the nymphs, who are his family, and a crowd of children. But now I don’t

know what you're doing. Where is this whirlwind of new craziness taking you? I heard something odd: first, nearby, orders like you'd give to hunting dogs when they get near a wild animal's den in a thicket; then, at the same time, stretched out from the mouth to the thief . Then announcement . After that they went away, feet stomping, and a confused sound came from nearby. It would be different if So I heard the sounds of wrong notes you sick you did to a nymph that had nothing to do with it?

CHORUS
They sing.
Deep-girdled nymph, don't be angry. No one's starting a war with you, nor has any unfriendly or trifling word touched my tongue. Please don't threaten me, but graciously tell me what I need: who is it who seems to speak in a wonderful, inspired voice from below the earth?

CYLLENE Speaking.
That's better: you sound gentler now. You would learn more by hunting rather than from a coward's great deeds or a nymph's ordeal. I won't put up with your loud, quarrelsome words. But calm down and tell me what it is you need.

CHORUS
Mighty Cyllene, lady of this land, I'll tell you in a moment why I've come. But first tell us about that scraping noise and who's making it.

CYLLENE
First of all, understand this: if you say one word of what I'm about to tell you, you'll be in trouble. This business is a secret even among the gods, so that no news of it may come to Hera. You see, Zeus came secretly to Atlas' house to the deep-girdled goddess and in a cave begot a single son. I am bringing him up myself, for his mother's strength is shaken by sickness as if by a storm. So I stay by his crib and take care of his food and drink and rest, all day and all night. He grows, day by day, in a very unusual way, and I'm astounded and afraid. It's not even six days since he was born, and he already stands as tall as a young man. His growth spurt hasn't wasted any time coming. That's the kind of child that's in my treasure-house. His father has ensured he would be difficult to find.
He has a hidden machine that makes the sound you're asking about, that so surprised you. It's a box full of pleasure that he made in just one day from a dead animal he found, and he's down there shaking it.

CHORUS *Singing.*

unspeakable child of a cow amazed prey speaking voice to make such sounds from a dead animal.

CYLLENE
Don’t be so skeptical: for a goddess is speaking trusty words to you.

CHORUS
How should I believe that a dead animal’s voice can roar like that?

CYLLENE
Believe it: it speaks now it’s dead, though it had no voice when it was alive.

CHORUS
What did it look like? Long, curved, short?

CYLLENE
Short, like a pitcher, and covered with a colorful hide.

CHORUS
Was it like a cat, or rather a leopard?

CYLLENE
In between, really: it’s round with short legs.

CHORUS
Closer to a ferret, then, or a crab?

CYLLENE
No, that’s not it; try something else.

CHORUS
Is it like one of the horned beetles that live on Aetna?

CYLLENE
Now you’re getting closer to the beast

CHORUS
And which part makes the sound, the inside or the outside?

CYLLENE
first cousin to a potsherd.

CHORUS

What name do you call it? Tell me, if you know any more.

CYLLENE
The boy calls the animal a “tortoise” and the instrument a “lyre.”

CHORUS
property

CYLLENE
and this is his only consolation or cure for sorrow. He enjoys idly singing along; he coaxes Aeolian tunes from the lyre. Thus the boy made himself a voice from a dead animal.

CHORUS
Singing; this strophe has an antistrophe at .
A loud voice extends over the place, flitting around like a bee over the flowers. As for the other matter, I am getting closer. Know this, goddess: whoever contrived this is none other than the thief. But don’t be angry or upset that I say this.

CYLLENE
What delusion has come over you? Who are you blaming as a thief?

CHORUS
Not you, by Zeus; I don’t want to upset you, my lady.

CYLLENE
Surely you’re not calling the son of Zeus a thief?

CHORUS
this very theft.

CYLLENE
if what you say is true.

CHORUS
I speak truth. stolen the cattle it fits cut

CYLLENE
I understand finally laughing at my foolishness nothing, delight for the child. You can be reassured about me from now on, and laugh at me if you get some joy or profit from it. But do not mock the son of Zeus, making childish remarks

about the child. For he did not inherit a thief’s nature from his father, nor does thievery hold sway in his mother’s family. If there is any theft here, look for a poor man as your thief; but this boy’s house is hardly poor. Consider his family, and fit bad deeds to bad men; it’s hardly appropriate to him. But you are always a child, even though you’re a young man and your beard grows on your face like a goat’s. Stop stretching up your smooth bald head for caresses. I tell you this: if you think the gods are foolish or laughable, you will soon be crying.

CHORUS
Singing; this is the antistrophe corresponding to the strophe at .
Turn and twist the words however you want, to find a clever story. You won’t convince me that the sewn-together hides are any others than the ones from the stolen cows of Loxias . Don’t try to turn me aside.

CHORUS
Because Zeus

CYLLENE
The child is no thief.

CHORUS
If he does bad things, then he is bad.

CYLLENE
I don’t like to hear bad things about Zeus’ son.

CHORUS
But if it’s the truth, then I have to say it.

CYLLENE
Don’t say

CYLLENE
Where are the cattle pastured?

CHORUS
Most of them now

CYLLENE
Who has them, wretch? Who

CHORUS

The boy has closed them up inside.

CYLLENE
Stop saying bad things about Zeus' son!

CHORUS
I would stop, if someone would bring out the cattle.

CYLLENE
You're choking me, you and those cows of yours.

CHORUS
left drive them out

CHORUS
Hey! Oh! what she said he didn't

SILENUS
Silenus has come back, and Cyllene has presumably left.
Hey!

CHORUS
Oh Loxias, of the cows

Apollo probably enters in response to the chorus' calls.
APOLLO
Cows are rewarded free. [?] Uncertain meaning.

THE PROGENY

Since being unearthed more than a century ago, the hoard of Oxyrhynchus Papyri has fascinated and frustrated classical scholars. There are 400,000 fragments, many containing text from the great writers of antiquity, and yet only a small amount have been read so far, due to most being unreadable.

However, scientists are now using multi-spectral imaging techniques, developed from satellite technology, to decode the papyri. The fragments, preserved between sheets of glass, respond to the infra-red spectrum, becoming at last readable.

The short extract below is the only known fragment we have of one of Sophocles' lost plays *The Progeny*. The fragment was only discovered in 2005, with the help of Oxford University and has sparked new interest in the forgotten work, which was based on the second siege of Thebes. According to myth, Polynices and six allies attacked Thebes when his brother Eteocles had refused to give up the throne as agreed. All but one of the seven invaders were killed and their children swore vengeance and attacked Thebes several years later, when the action of this play takes place. These Epigonoi (descendents) defeated and killed Laodamas, the son of Eteocles, conquering Thebes and installing Thersander on the throne.

FRAGMENT

Speaker 1: . . . eating the whole and sharpening the shining iron.

Speaker 2: And the helmets shake their purple-tinged crests. For the wearers of breastplates, the weavers strike up the wise shuttle's songs, waking up those who sleep.

Speaker 1: And he fastens as one the chariot's rail.

MINOR FRAGMENTS

Translated by E. H Plumptre

11

HAST thou done fearful evil? Thou must bear
Evil as fearful; and the holy light
Of righteousness shines clearly.

12

Kings wisdom gain, consorting with the wise.

13

Man is but breath and shadow, nothing more.

14

The mightiest and the wisest in their minds
Thou may’st see like to him who standeth here,
Giving good counsel to a man distressed;
But when God’s will shall send the scourge on one
Who lived till then as fortune’s favourite,
All his fine phrases vanish utterly.

35

‘Neath every stone there lies a scorpion hid.

58

Hark! some one cries — Or do I vainly call?
The man who fears hears noise on every side.

59

Be sure, no lie can ever reach old age.

61

A maiden too, and one of Argive race,
Whose glory lies in fewest words or none.

62

Short speech becomes the wise of heart and good
To parents who begat and bore and bred.

63

Be of good cheer, O lady: dangers oft,
Though blowing dreams by night, are lulled by day.

64

None cleave to life so fondly as the old.

65

Life, O my son, is sweetest boon of all:
It is not given to men to taste death twice.

66

The living should not glory o’er the dead,
As knowing well that he himself must die.

67

How all men seek to shun the tyrant’s face!

88

A soul with good intent and purpose just
Discerns far more than lecturer can teach.

89

Much wisdom often goes with fewest words.

90

A man whose whole delight is still to talk
Knows not how much he vexes all his friends.

91

If thou art noble, as thou say'st thyself,
Tell me from whence thou'rt sprung. No speech stain
What comes of noble nature, nobly born.

92

Thy speech is worthy, not too harshly said;
A noble stock that bears the test of proof,
Will still gain fair repute beyond all blame.

93

Who can count man's prosperity as great,
Or small and lowly, or of no account?
None of all this continues in one stay.

94

Strange is it that the godless, who have sprung
From evil-doers, should fare prosperously,
While good men, born of noble stock, should be
By adverse fortune vexed. It was ill done
For the Gods thus to order lives of men.
What ought to be is this, that godly souls
Should from the Gods gain some clear recompense,
And the unjust pay some clear penalty;
So none would prosper who are base of soul.

98

Then does men's life become one vast disease,
When once they seek their ills by ills to cure.

99

Not easy is it to resist the just.

100

Deceit is base, unfit for noble souls,

101

A righteous tongue has with it mightiest strength.

102

Hush, boy! for silence brings a thousand gains.

103

Why tellest thou thy tale of many words?
Superfluous speech is irksome everywhere.

104

In some things be not anxious to inquire:
Far better is it oft to leave them hid.

105

I know not how to answer to these things.
When good men by the base
Are overcome in strife,
What city could endure such deeds as this?

106

No one, I trow; yet take good heed to this,
Lest it be better, e'en by godless deeds,
To triumph over foes than as a slave
To yield obedience.

107

Cease thou. Enough for me the name of son
Of such a father, if indeed I 'm his:
And if I be not, small the injury;
Repute oft triumphs o'er the truth itself.

108

The bastard is as strong as lawful sons;
Goodness still claims a rank legitimate.

109

109

Riches gain friends, gain honours, — further still,
Gain highest sovereignty for those who sit
In low estate. The rich have no men foes;
And if they have, these still conceal their hate.
A wondrous power has wealth to wind its way
Or on plain ground, or heights that none may tread,
Where one that's poor, although 'twere close at hand
Would fail to gain the thing his heart desires.
The form unsightly and of no esteem
It makes both wise of speech and fair to see:
It only has the power of joy or grief,
It only knows the art of hiding ill.

162

A pleasant ill is this disease of love,
And 'twere not ill to sketch its likeness thus:
When sharp cold spreads through all the aether clear,
And children seize a crystal icicle,
At first they firmly hold their new-found joy;
But in the end the melting mass nor cares
To slip away, nor is it good to keep:
So those that love, the self-same strong desire
Now leads to action, now to idleness.

202

What virtue gains alone abides with us.

203

The hearts of good men are not quickly bowed.

204

Still where the right of free, true speech is gone,
And the worse counsel in a state prevails,
Blunders make shipwreck of security.

205

And how can I, a mortal, fight with fate
That comes from heaven, when danger presses hard,
And hope helps not?

206

Since age is on thee, keep its fair repute from evil speech

209

The tongue is held in honour by such men
As reckon words of more account than deeds.

235

Come, let us quickly go: it cannot be
That any blame should fall on righteous haste.

236

It brings some pain, I know, but one must try,
As best one may, to bear the ills of life.
Needs must we find some healing from these things.

237

Some pleasure is there found even in words,
When with them comes forgetfulness of ills.

238

Though I be old, yet with advance of age
Comes reason’s growth, and skill to counsel well.

239

There stretcheth by the sea
A fair Eubœan shore, and o’er it creeps
The vine of Bacchos, each day’s growth complete.
In morning brightness all the land is green
With tendrils fair and spreading. Noontide comes,
And then the unripe cluster forms apace:
The day declines, and purple grow the grapes;

At eve the whole bright vintage is brought in,
And the mixed wine poured out.

255

I own it true. Right well the proverb runs,
That smallest things make known a man’s true bent.

284

Wherefore conceal thou nothing. Time that sees
And heareth all things bringeth all to light.

288

No good e’er comes of leisure purposeless;
And Heaven ne’er helps the men who will not act.

298

’Tis only in God’s garden men may reap
True joy and blessing.

302

Chance never helps the men who do not work.

304

He who neglects the Muses in his youth
Has wasted all the past, and lost true life
For all the future.

311

A mortal man should think things fit for men.

321

This is most grievous, when it might be ours
To set things straight, and we by our own act
Will bring fresh woe and trouble on our heads.

322

But he who dares to look at danger straight,
His speech is clear, his spirit falters not.

323

It is not good to lie; but when the truth
Brings on a man destruction terrible,
He may be pardoned though not good his speech.

325

And wonder not, O prince, that thus I cling
So close to gain; for they whose life is long
Still cleave to profit with their might and main,
And men count all things else as less than wealth;
And though there be that praise a life kept free
From all disease, to me no poor man seems
In that blest state, but sick continually.

326

The noblest life is that of righteousness;
The best, one free from sickness; sweetest far
To have each day the fill of all we wish.

342

Now in the gates *Æ*neas, Goddess-born,
Is seen, and on his shoulders bears his sire,
Who lets his byssine mantle fall in folds
On back where smote the fiery levin-flash,
And gathers round him all his band of slaves;
Beyond all hope, the multitude draws near
Of Phrygians who would fain be emigrants.

343

But little count we make of toil gone by.

358

For those who fare but ill ’tis very sweet

E’en for a moment to forget their ills.

359

None has no sorrow; happiest who has least.

379

He ’twas that taught the Argive army first
To build their walls, and found inventions strange
Of measures, weights, and numbers; he the first
To plan the ten that upward rise from one,
And from the tens to fifties pass, and so
From thence to thousands. He alone devised
The army’s beacon-lights and nightly watch,
And signals of the morning, and made clear
What he did not devise. He brought to sight
The measures and the motions of the stars,
And all their order, and the heavenly signs,
And for the men who guide their ships on sea,
The Great Bear’s circle, and the Dog’s cold setting.

380

Did he not drive away the famine from them;
And, with God’s help, discover pastimes wise,
As they sat down, after long toil at sea —
Draughts, and dice too, sweet help for idleness?

419

But when an oath is added, then the soul
Is made more careful, having then to shun
Both blame of friends and sin against the Gods.

434

The aged man becomes a child again.

436

’Tis better not to be than vilely live.

498

War ever takes our young men in its net.

499

A weary life is that the sailors lead,
To whom no gift from Heaven or Fortune sent
Could offer worthy recompense. Poor souls,
Adventuring traffic far on slender chance,
They save, or gain, or lose all utterly.

500

All evil things are found in length of years;
Sense gone, work useless, thoughts and counsels vain.

501

If men by tears could heal their several ills,
And by their weeping bring the dead to life,
Then gold would be of far less price than tears.

512

Greedy of gain is every barbarous tribe.

513

Be not afraid: speak thou the truth, and then
Thou shalt not fail.

514

What man soe’er, in troubles waxing wroth,
Will use a cure that’s worse than the disease,
Is no physician skilled to deal with grief.

517

I by myself am nought; yea, oftentimes
So look I upon all our womankind,
That we are nothing. Young, we lead a life

Of all most joyous, in our father’s house,
For want of knowledge is our kindly nurse;
But when we come to marriageable years,
Then are we pushed and bartered for away
From household gods and from our parents dear —
Some unto alien husbands, some to men
Of stranger race, and some to homes full strange,
Or full of turmoil: and when one night binds us,
We needs must bear, and think of it as right.

518

Among mankind we all are born alike
Of father and of mother. None excels
Another in his nature, but the fate
Of evil chance holds some of us, and some
Good fortune favours, and necessity
Holds some in bondage.

520

Praise no man much until thou see his death.

535

Within the tablets of thy mind write this
That I have said to thee.

563

Well, well, what greater joy could’st thou receive
Than touching land, and then, beneath a roof,
With slumbering mind to hear the pelting storm?

572

We should not speak of one that prospers well
As happy, till his life have run its course,
And reached its goal. An evil spirit’s gift
In shortest time has oft laid low the state
Of one full rich in great prosperity,
When the change comes, and so the Gods appoint.

582

No one who sins against his will is base.
Tell not to many what Fate sends on thee:
’Tis comelier far in silence to lament.

588

I mourn for those my locks as young mare doth,
Who, caught by shepherds, in the stable stands,
And with rough hands has all her chestnut mane
Cropped off, and then is led in meadow fair,
Which clear streams water, and when thus she sees
Her likeness, with her hair thus foully cropped,
Ah, one hard-hearted wall might pity her,
Crouching in shame, as maddened with disgrace,
Mourning and weeping o’er the mane that’s gone.

606

Ne’er can a state be well and safely ruled,
In which all justice and all purity
Are trampled under foot, and brawling knave
With cruel goad drives the poor state to death.

607

Not mortal men alone does Love assail,
No, nor yet women, but it leaves its stamp
Upon the souls of Gods, and passes on
To mighty ocean. Zeus omnipotent
Is powerless to avert it, and submits
And yields full willingly.

608

No greater evil can a man endure
Than a bad wife, nor find a greater good
Than one both good and wise; and each man speaks
As judging by the experience of his life.

609

Forgive me, and be silent, patiently;
For that which to us women bringeth shame
One ought in women's presence to conceal.

610

Would'st thou count up the roll of happy men,
Thou shalt not find one mortal truly blest.

611

Ah, women! no one can escape disgrace
On whom Zeus sendeth ills in armed array;
And heaven-sent plagues we still must bear perforce.

612

Sons are the anchors of a mother's life.

622

Thou art but young; and thou hast much to learn,
And many things to hear and understand:
Seek still to add fresh knowledge profitable.

626

Death comes, the last great healer of all ills.

649

Ah, boy! 'tis just the noble and the good
That Ares loves to slay. The bold in tongue,
Shunning all pain, are out of danger's reach;
For Ares careth not for coward souls.

657

Time, stripping off the veil, brings all to light.

658

Time, even Time, in all the vast expanse
Of this our human life,

Finds plenteous wisdom for the souls that seek.

659

But when the Gods would hide the things of heaven,
Thou can’st not learn, although thou travel far.

660

One wise man is no match for many fools.

661

A good man still will succour the distressed.

662

True wisdom ranks among the Gods most high.

663

They that fare ill become not only deaf,
But, even though they gaze, they see not clear
What lies before them.
Sore evil still, and all unmanageable,
Is want of knowledge. Folly proves itself
Of wickedness true sister.

664

We cannot speak good words of deeds not good.

665

We should not joy in pleasures that bring shame.

666

Fortune ne’er helps the man whose courage fails.

667

Shame brings but little help in evil things;
Your silence is the talker’s best ally.

What means this praise? The man who yields to wine
Is void of understanding, slave to wrath,
And wont, though babbling many words and vain,
To hear full loth what eagerly he spoke.

669

When one is found as taken in the act
Of fraud and wrong, whate'er his skill of speech,
The only course for him is silence then;
Yet that is hard to bear for one who feels
Conscious of innocence.

670

In vows, forsooth, a woman shuns the pangs
And pains of childbirth; but the evil o'er,
Once more she comes within the self-same net,
O'ercome by that strong passion of her soul.

671

No oath weighs aught on one of scoundrel soul.

672

When trouble ceases e'en our troubles please.

674

Where fathers are by children overcome,
That is no city of the wise and good,
'Tis best, where'er we are, to follow still
The customs of the country.

675

He to whom men pay honour's noble meed
Has need of noble deeds innumerable,
And out of easy conflict there can come
But little glory.

676

Counsels are mightier things than strength of hands.

677

My body is enslaved, my mind is free.

678

Not Kyprian only, children, is she called,
Who rules o’er Kypros, but bears many names.
Hades is she, and Might imperishable,
And raving Madness, and untamed Desire,
And bitter Lamentation. All is hers,
Or earnest, or in calm, or passionate;
For still where’er is life she winds within
The inmost heart. Where finds this Goddess not
Her easy prey? She masters all the tribe
Of fish that swim the waters, she prevails
O’er all four-footed beasts that walk the earth.
Her wing directs the course of wandering birds,
Mighty o’er beasts, and men, and Gods above.
What God in wrestling throws she not thrice o’er?
Yea, if ‘twere lawful to speak all the truth,
She sways the breast of Zeus. All weaponless,
Without or spear or sword, the Kyprian queen
Cuts short the schemes of mortals or of Gods.

679

What house hath ever gained prosperity,
How swoln soe’er with pride, without the grace
Of woman’s nobler nature.

680

But when bereavement falls upon her house,
A woman has the purpose of a man.

681

No small disease is poverty for those
Who boast of wealth; than poverty no foe

Is found more hostile.

682

O race of mortal men oppressed with care!
What nothings are we, like to shadows vain,
Cumbering the ground, and wandering to and fro!

683

None but the Gods may live untouched by ill.

684

O God, we mortals find no way to flee
From evils deeply-rooted, sent from Heaven.

685

Would one might live, and give the present hour
Its fill of pleasure, while the future creeps
For ever unforeseen.

686

The skilful gamester still should make the best
Of any throw, and not bemoan his luck.

687

Tis hope that feeds the larger half of men.

688

Ne’er can the wise grow old, in whom there dwells
A soul sustained with light of Heaven’s own day:
Great gain to men is forethought such as theirs.

689

He who in midst of woes desireth life,
Is either coward or insensible.

690

A. — Now he is dead, I yearn to die with him.
B. — Why such hot haste? Thou needs must meet thy fate.
Truth evermore surpasseth words in might.

694

A woman’s oaths I write upon the waves.

701

To drink against one’s will
Is not less evil than unwilling thirst.

702

If thou should’st bring all wisdom of the wise
To one who thirsts, thou could’st not please him
Than giving him to drink.

703

Most basely wilt thou die by doom of Heaven,
Who, being as thou art, dost still drain off
Thy pottle-deep potations.

705

This wanton insolence
Is never brought to self-control in youth,
But still among the young bursts out, and then
Tames down and withers.

707

I know that God is ever such as this,
Darkly disclosing counsels to the wise;
But to the simple, speaking fewest words,
Plain teacher found.

709

Thou shalt find a God
Who knoweth not or charity or grace.

But loves strict justice, that and that alone.

711

Whoso will enter in a monarch’s house
Is but his bond-slave, though he come as free.

713

In many a turning of the wheel of God
My fate revolves and changes all its mood;
E’en as the moon’s face never keepeth still
For but two nights in one position fixed,
But from its hiding-place first comes as new,
With brightening face, and thenceforth waxeth full
And when it gains its noblest phase of all,
Wanes off again, and comes to nothingness.

714

Counsel of evil travelleth all too quick.

715

If any man beginneth all things well,
The chances are his ends agree thereto.

717

Words that are false bring forth no fruit at all.

718

Though one be poor, his fame may yet stand high.
Not one whit worse the poor whose heart is wise.
What profit is there from our many goods,
If care, with evil thoughts,
Is still the nurse of fair prosperity?

719

Thrice happy they, who, having seen these rites,
Then pass to Hades: there to these alone

Is granted life, all others evil find.

723

What may be taught I learn; what may be found
That I still seek for; what must come by prayer,
For that I asked the Gods.

724

Go forth, ye people strong of hand, to work,
Who with your balanced baskets of first-fruits
Worship the Working Goddess, child of Zeus,
Whose eyes are dread to look on.

725

And dost thou mourn the death of mortal man,
Not knowing if the future bringeth gain?

727

Thou waxest wanton, like a high-fed colt;
For maw and mouth are glutted with excess.

732

Searching out all things, thou in most men’s acts
Wilt find but baseness.

739

Unlooked-for things must once for all begin.

741

Those who lose such friends lose them to their joy,
And they who have them for deliverance pray.

749

This is the gift of God, and what the Gods
Shall give, we men, my child, should never shun.

762

An old man’s wrath is like ill-tempered scythe,
Sharp to begin, but quickly blunted off.
The dice of Zeus have ever lucky throws..

772

Be pitiful, O Sun,
Whom the wise name as father of the Gods,
Author of all things.

779

Since we have rightly made our prayer to God,
Let us now go, O boys, to where the wise
Impart their knowledge of the Muses’ arts.
Each day we need to take some forward step,
Till we gain power to study nobler things.
Evil a boy will learn without a guide,
With little labour, learning from himself;
But good, not even with his teacher near,
Dwells in his soul, but is full hardly gained:
Let us then, boys, be watchful, and work hard,
Lest we should seem with men untaught to rank
The children of a father far from home.

780

The gratitude of one whose memory fails
Is quickly gone.

The Greek Texts

The Bay of Salamis. At the age of sixteen, Sophocles was chosen to lead the paean choral chant to celebrate the Greek victory over the Persians at the Battle of Salamis in 480 BC.

LIST OF GREEK TEXTS

In this section of the eBook, readers can view the original Greek texts of Sophocles' works. You may wish to Bookmark this page for future reference.

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Αίας - AJAX

ΑΘΑΝΑ
Ἀεὶ μέν, ὦ παῖ Λαρτίου, δέδορκά σε
πεῖράν τιν’ ἐχθρῶν ἁρπάσαι θηρώμενον·
καὶ νῦν ἐπὶ σκηναῖς σε ναυτικαῖς ὁρῶ
Αἴαντος, ἔνθα τάξιν ἐσχάτην ἔχει,
πάλαι κυνηγετοῦντα καὶ μετρούμενον
ἴχνη τὰ κείνου νεοχάραχθ’, ὅπως ἴδῃς
εἴτ’ ἔνδον εἴτ’ οὐκ ἔνδον. Εὖ δέ σ’ ἐκφέρει
κυνὸς Λακαίνης ὥς τις εὔρινος βάσις·
ἔνδον γὰρ ἀνὴρ ἄρτι τυγχάνει, κάρα
στάζων ἱδρῶτι καὶ χέρας ξιφοκτόνους·
καί σ’ οὐδὲν εἴσω τῆσδε παπταίνειν πύλης
ἔτ’ ἔργον ἐστίν, ἐννέπειν δ’ ὅτου χάριν
σπουδὴν ἔθου τήνδ’, ὡς παρ’ εἰδυίας μάθῃς.

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ
Ὦ φθέγμ’ Ἀθάνας, φιλτάτης ἐμοὶ θεῶν,
ὡς εὐμαθές σου, κἂν ἄποπτος ᾖς, ὅμως
φώνημ’ ἀκούω καὶ ξυναρπάζω φρενί,
χαλκοστόμου κώδωνος ὡς τυρσηνικῆς.
Καὶ νῦν ἐπέγνως εὖ μ’ ἐπ’ ἀνδρὶ δυσμενεῖ
βάσιν κυκλοῦντ’, Αἴαντι τῷ σακεσφόρῳ·
κεῖνον γάρ, οὐδέν’ ἄλλον, ἰχνεύω πάλαι.
Νυκτὸς γὰρ ἡμᾶς τῆσδε πρᾶγος ἄσκοπον
ἔχει περάνας, - εἴπερ εἴργασται τάδε·
ἴσμεν γὰρ οὐδὲν τρανές, ἀλλ’ ἀλώμεθα·
κἀγὼ ‘θελοντὴς τῷδ’ ὑπεζύγην πόνῳ.
Ἐφθαρμένας γὰρ ἀρτίως εὑρίσκομεν
λείας ἁπάσας καὶ κατηναρισμένας
ἐκ χειρὸς αὐτοῖς ποιμνίων ἐπιστάταις.
Τήνδ’ οὖν ἐκείνῳ πᾶς τις αἰτίαν νέμει.
Καί μοί τις ὀπτὴρ αὐτὸν εἰσιδὼν μόνον
πηδῶντα πεδία σὺν νεορράντῳ ξίφει

φράζει τε κἀδήλωσεν· εὐθέως δ’ ἐγὼ
κατ’ ἴχνος ᾄσσω, καὶ τὰ μὲν σημαίνομαι,
τὰ δ’ ἐκπέπληγμαι κοὐκ ἔχω μαθεῖν ὅτου.
Καιρὸν δ’ ἐφήκεις· πάντα γὰρ τά τ’ οὖν πάρος
τά τ’ εἰσέπειτα σῇ κυβερνῶμαι χερί.

ΑΘ. Ἔγνων, Ὀδυσσεῦ, καὶ πάλαι φύλαξ ἔβην
τῇ σῇ πρόθυμος εἰς ὁδὸν κυναγίᾳ.

ΟΔ. Ἦ καί, φίλη δέσποινα, πρὸς καιρὸν πονῶ;

ΑΘ. Ὡς ἔστιν ἀνδρὸς τοῦδε τἄργα ταῦτά σοι.

ΟΔ. Καὶ πρὸς τί δυσλόγιστον ὦδ’ ἦξεν χέρα;

ΑΘ. Χόλῳ βαρυνθεὶς τῶν Ἀχιλλείων ὅπλων.

ΟΔ. Τί δῆτα ποίμναις τήνδ’ ἐπεμπίπτει βάσιν;

ΑΘ. Δοκῶν ἐν ὑμῖν χεῖρα χραίνεσθαι φόνῳ.

ΟΔ. Ἦ καὶ τὸ βούλευμ’ ὡς ἐπ’ Ἀργείοις τόδ’ ἦν;

ΑΘ. Κἂν ἐξεπράξατ’, εἰ κατημέλησ’ ἐγώ.

ΟΔ. Ποίαισι τόλμαις ταῖσδε καὶ φρενῶν θράσει;

ΑΘ. Νύκτωρ ἐφ’ ὑμᾶς δόλιος ὁρμᾶται μόνος.

ΟΔ. Ἦ καὶ παρέστη κἀπὶ τέρμ’ ἀφίκετο;

ΑΘ. Καὶ δὴ ‘πὶ δισσαῖς ἦν στρατηγίσιν πύλαις.
50 ΟΔ. Καὶ πῶς ἐπέσχε χεῖρα μαιμῶσαν φόνου;

ΑΘ. Ἐγώ σφ’ ἀπείργω, δυσφόρους ἐπ’ ὄμμασι
γνώμας βαλοῦσα τῆς ἀνηκέστου χαρᾶς,
καὶ πρός τε ποίμνας ἐκτρέπω σύμμικτά τε
λείας ἄδαστα βουκόλων φρουρήματα·
55 ἔνθ’ εἰσπεσὼν ἔκειρε πολύκερων φόνον
κύκλῳ ῥαχίζων· κἀδόκει μὲν ἔσθ’ ὅτε
δισσοὺς Ἀτρείδας αὐτόχειρ κτείνειν ἔχων,
ὅτ’ ἄλλοτ’ ἄλλον ἐμπίτνων στρατηλατῶν.
Ἐγὼ δὲ φοιτῶντ’ ἄνδρα μανιάσιν νόσοις
60 ὤτρυνον, εἰσέβαλλον εἰς ἔρκη κακά.
Κἄπειτ’ ἐπειδὴ τοῦδ’ ἐλώφησεν φόνου,
τοὺς ζῶντας αὖ δεσμοῖσι συνδήσας βοῶν
ποίμνας τε πάσας εἰς δόμους κομίζεται,
ὡς ἄνδρας, οὐχ ὡς εὔκερων ἄγραν ἔχων·
65 καὶ νῦν κατ’ οἴκους συνδέτους αἰκίζεται.
Δείξω δὲ καὶ σοὶ τήνδε περιφανῆ νόσον,
ὡς πᾶσιν Ἀργείοισιν εἰσιδὼν θροῇς.
Θαρσῶν δὲ μίμνε μηδὲ συμφορὰν δέχου

τὸν ἄνδρ’· ἐγὼ γὰρ ὀμμάτων ἀποστρόφους
αὐγὰς ἀπείρξω σὴν πρόσοψιν εἰσιδεῖν.
Οὗτος, σὲ τὸν τὰς αἰχμαλωτίδας χέρας
δεσμοῖς ἀπευθύνοντα προσμολεῖν καλῶ.
Αἴαντα φωνῶ· στεῖχε δωμάτων πάρος.

ΟΔ. Τί δρᾷς, Ἀθάνα; μηδαμῶς σφ’ ἔξω κάλει.

ΑΘ. Οὐ σῖγ’ ἀνέξῃ, μηδὲ δειλίαν ἀρῇ;

ΟΔ. Μή, πρὸς θεῶν· ἀλλ’ ἔνδον ἀρκείτω μένων.

ΑΘ. Τί μὴ γένηται; πρόσθεν οὐκ ἀνὴρ ὅδ’ ἦν;

ΟΔ. Ἐχθρός γε τῷδε τἀνδρὶ καὶ τανῦν ἔτι.

ΑΘ. Οὔκουν γέλως ἥδιστος εἰς ἐχθροὺς γελᾶν;

ΟΔ. Ἐμοὶ μὲν ἀρκεῖ τοῦτον ἐν δόμοις μένειν.

ΑΘ. Μεμηνότ’ ἄνδρα περιφανῶς ὀκνεῖς ἰδεῖν;

ΟΔ. Φρονοῦντα γάρ νιν οὐκ ἂν ἐξέστην ὅκνῳ.

ΑΘ. Ἀλλ’ οὐδὲ νῦν σε μὴ παρόντ’ ἴδῃ πέλας.

ΟΔ. Πῶς; εἴπερ ὀφθαλμοῖς γε τοῖς αὐτοῖς ὁρᾷ.
ΑΘ. Ἐγὼ σκοτώσω βλέφαρα καὶ δεδορκότα.

ΟΔ. Γένοιτο μεντἂν πᾶν θεοῦ τεχνωμένου.

ΑΘ. Σίγα νυν ἐστώς, καὶ μέν’ ὡς κυρεῖς ἔχων.

ΟΔ. Μένοιμ’ ἄν· ἤθελον δ’ ἂν ἐκτὸς ὢν τυχεῖν.

ΑΘ. Ὦ οὗτος, Αἶαν, δεύτερόν σε προσκαλῶ·
τί βαιὸν οὕτως ἐντρέπῃ τῆς συμμάχου;

ΑΙΑΣ
Ὦ χαῖρ’, Ἀθάνα, χαῖρε, Διογενὲς τέκνον,
ὡς εὖ παρέστης· καί σε παγχρύσοις ἐγὼ
στέψω λαφύροις τῆσδε τῆς ἄγρας χάριν.

ΑΘ. Καλῶς ἔλεξας· ἀλλ’ ἐκεῖνό μοι φράσον,
ἔβαψας ἔγχος εὖ πρὸς Ἀργείων στρατῷ;

ΑΙ. Κόμπος πάρεστι κοὐκ ἀπαρνοῦμαι τὸ μή.

ΑΘ. Ἦ καὶ πρὸς Ἀτρείδαισιν ᾒχμασας χέρας;

ΑΙ. Ὥστ᾽ οὔποτ᾽ Αἴαντ᾽, οἶδ᾽, ἀτιμάσουσ᾽ ἔτι.

ΑΘ. Τεθνᾶσιν ἄνδρες, ὡς τὸ σὸν ξυνῆκ᾽ ἐγώ.
100 ΑΙ. Θανόντες ἤδη τἄμ᾽ ἀφαιρείσθων ὅπλα.

ΑΘ. Εἶεν· τί γὰρ δὴ παῖς ὁ τοῦ Λαερτίου;
ποῦ σοι τύχης ἔστηκεν; ἦ πέφευγέ σε;

ΑΙ. Ἦ τοὐπίτριπτον κίναδος ἐξήρου μ᾽ ὅπου;

ΑΘ. Ἔγωγ᾽· Ὀδυσσέα τὸν σὸν ἐνστάτην λέγω.
105 ΑΙ. Ἥδιστος, ὦ δέσποινα, δεσμώτης ἔσω
θακεῖ· θανεῖν γὰρ αὐτὸν οὔ τί πω θέλω.

ΑΘ. Πρὶν ἂν τί δράσῃς ἢ τί κερδάνῃς πλέον;

ΑΙ. Πρὶν ἂν δεθεὶς πρὸς κίον’ ἐρκείου στέγης -

ΑΘ. Τί δῆτα τὸν δύστηνον ἐργάσῃ κακόν;
ΑΙ. Μάστιγι πρῶτον νῶτα φοινιχθεὶς θάνῃ.

ΑΘ. Μὴ δῆτα τὸν δύστηνον ὦδέ γ’ αἰκίσῃ.

ΑΙ. Χαίρειν, Ἀθάνα, τἄλλ’ ἐγώ σ’ ἐφίεμαι,
κεῖνος δὲ τείσει τήνδε κοὐκ ἄλλην δίκην.

ΑΘ. Σὺ δ’ οὖν, ἐπειδὴ τέρψις ἥδε σοι τὸ δρᾶν,
χρῶ χειρί, φείδου μηδὲν ὧνπερ ἐννοεῖς.

ΑΙ. Χωρῶ πρὸς ἔργον, τοῦτό σοι δ’ ἐφίεμαι,
τοιάνδ’ ἀεί μοι σύμμαχον παρεστάναι.

ΑΘ. Ὁρᾷς, Ὀδυσσεῦ, τὴν θεῶν ἰσχὺν ὅση;
Τούτου τίς ἄν σοι τἀνδρὸς ἢ προνούστερος
ἢ δρᾶν ἀμείνων ηὑρέθη τὰ καίρια;

ΟΔ. Ἐγὼ μὲν οὐδέν’ οἶδ’· ἐποικτίρω δέ νιν
δύστηνον ἔμπας, καίπερ ὄντα δυσμενῆ,
ὀθούνεκ’ ἄτῃ συγκατέζευκται κακῇ,
οὐδὲν τὸ τούτου μᾶλλον ἢ τοὐμὸν σκοπῶν.
Ὁρῶ γὰρ ἡμᾶς οὐδὲν ὄντας ἄλλο πλὴν
εἴδωλ’, ὅσοιπερ ζῶμεν, ἢ κούφην σκιάν.

ΑΘ. Τοιαῦτα τοίνυν εἰσορῶν ὑπέρκοπον
μηδέν ποτ’ εἴπῃς αὐτὸς ἐς θεοὺς ἔπος,
μηδ’ ὄγκον ἄρῃ μηδέν’, εἴ τινος πλέον
ἢ χειρὶ βρίθεις ἢ μακροῦ πλούτου βάθει·
ὡς ἡμέρα κλίνει τε κἀνάγει πάλιν
ἅπαντα τἀνθρώπεια· τοὺς δὲ σώφρονας
θεοὶ φιλοῦσι καὶ στυγοῦσι τοὺς κακούς.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
Τελαμώνιε παῖ, τῆς ἀμφιρύτου
Σαλαμῖνος ἔχων βάθρον ἀγχιάλου,
σὲ μὲν εὖ πράσσοντ’ ἐπιχαίρω·
σὲ δ’ ὅταν πληγὴ Διὸς ἢ ζαμενὴς
λόγος ἐκ Δαναῶν κακόθρους ἐπιβῇ,
μέγαν ὄκνον ἔχω καὶ πεφόβημαι
πτηνῆς ὡς ὄμμα πελείας.
Ὡς καὶ τῆς νῦν φθιμένης νυκτὸς
μεγάλοι θόρυβοι κατέχουσ’ ἡμᾶς
ἐπὶ δυσκλείᾳ, σὲ τὸν ἱππομανῆ
λειμῶν’ ἐπιβάντ’ ὀλέσαι Δαναῶν
βοτὰ καὶ λείαν
ἥπερ δορίληπτος ἔτ’ ἦν λοιπή,
κτείνοντ’ αἴθωνι σιδήρῳ.
Τοιούσδε λόγους ψιθύρους πλάσσων
εἰς ὦτα φέρει πᾶσιν Ὀδυσσεύς,
καὶ σφόδρα πείθει· περὶ γὰρ σοῦ νῦν
εὔπειστα λέγει, καὶ πᾶς ὁ κλύων

τοῦ λέξαντος χαίρει μᾶλλον
τοῖς σοῖς ἄχεσιν καθυβρίζων.
Τῶν γὰρ μεγάλων ψυχῶν ἰεὶς
οὐκ ἂν ἁμάρτοις· κατὰ δ’ ἄν τις ἐμοῦ
τοιαῦτα λέγων οὐκ ἂν πείθοι·
πρὸς γὰρ τὸν ἔχονθ’ ὁ φθόνος ἕρπει·
καίτοι σμικροὶ μεγάλων χωρὶς
σφαλερὸν πύργου ῥῦμα πέλονται·
μετὰ γὰρ μεγάλων βαιὸς ἄριστ’ ἄν,
καὶ μέγας ὀρθοῖθ’ ὑπὸ μικροτέρων·
ἀλλ’ οὐ δυνατὸν τοὺς ἀνοήτους
τούτων γνώμας προδιδάσκειν.
Ὑπὸ τοιούτων ἀνδρῶν θορυβῇ·
χἠμεῖς οὐδὲν σθένομεν πρὸς ταῦτ’
ἀπαλέξασθαι σοῦ χωρίς, ἄναξ·
ἀλλ’ - ὅτε γὰρ δὴ τὸ σὸν ὄμμ’ ἀπέδραν,
παταγοῦσιν ἅπερ πτηνῶν ἀγέλαι -
μέγαν αἰγυπιόν ‹γ’› ὑποδείσαντες,
τάχ’ ἄν, ἐξαίφνης εἰ σὺ φανείης,
σιγῇ πτήξειαν ἄφωνοι.
Ἦ ῥά σε Ταυροπόλα Διὸς Ἄρτεμις - Str.
ὦ μεγάλα φάτις, ὦ
μᾶτερ αἰσχύνας ἐμᾶς -
ὥρμασε πανδάμους ἐπὶ βοῦς ἀγελαίας,
ἤ πού τινος νίκας ἀκάρπωτον χάριν,
ἤ ῥα κλυτῶν ἐνάρων
ψευσθεῖσ’, ἀδώροις εἴτ’ ἐλαφαβολίαις;
ἢ χαλκοθώραξ, εἴ τιν’ Ἐνυάλιος
μομφὰν ἔχων ξυνοῦ δορὸς ἐννυχίοις
μαχαναῖς ἐτείσατο λώβαν;
Οὔ ποτε γὰρ φρενόθεν γ’ ἐπ’ ἀριστερά, Ant.
παῖ Τελαμῶνος, ἔβας
τόσσον ἐν ποίμναις πίτνων·
ἥκοι γὰρ ἂν θεία νόσος· ἀλλ’ ἀπερύκοι
καὶ Ζεὺς κακὰν καὶ Φοῖβος Ἀργείων φάτιν·
εἰ δ’ ὑποβαλλόμενοι
κλέπτουσι μύθους οἱ μεγάλοι βασιλῆς,
ἢ τᾶς ἀσώτου Σισυφιδᾶν γενεᾶς,
μὴ μή μ’, ἄναξ, ἔθ’ ὧδ’ ἐφάλοις κλισίαις

ἐμμένων κακὰν φάτιν ἄρῃ.
Ἀλλ’ ἄνα ἐξ ἐδράνων ὅπου μακραίωνι Ep.
στηρίζῃ ποτὲ τᾷδ’ ἀγωνίῳ σχολᾷ
195 ἄταν οὐρανίαν φλέγων.
Ἐχθρῶν δ’ ὕβρις ὧδ’ ἀταρβήτως
ὁρμᾶτ’ ἐν εὐανέμοισ‹ι› βάσσαις,
πάντων καγχαζόντων
γλώσσαις βαρυάλγητ’·
200 ἐμοὶ δ’ ἄχος ἔστακεν.

ΤΕΚΜΗΣΣΑ
Ναὸς ἀρωγοὶ τῆς Αἴαντος,
γενεᾶς χθονίων ἀπ’ Ἐρεχθειδᾶν,
ἔχομεν στοναχὰς οἱ κηδόμενοι
τοῦ Τελαμῶνος τηλόθεν οἴκου·
205 νῦν γὰρ ὁ δεινὸς μέγας ὠμοκρατὴς
Αἴας θολερῷ
κεῖται χειμῶνι νοσήσας.

ΧΟ. Τί δ’ ἐνήλλακται τῆς ἠρεμίας
νὺξ ἥδε βάρος;
210 παῖ τοῦ Φρυγίου ‹σὺ› Τελεύταντος,
λέγ’, ἐπεί σε λέχος δουριάλωτον
στέρξας ἀνέχει θούριος Αἴας·
ὥστ’ οὐκ ἂν ἄϊδρις ὑπείποις.

ΤΕ. Πῶς δῆτα λέγω λόγον ἄρρητον;
215 θανάτῳ γὰρ ἴσον πάθος ἐκπεύσῃ·
μανίᾳ γὰρ ἁλοὺς ἡμὶν ὁ κλεινὸς
νύκτερος Αἴας ἀπελωβήθη·
τοιαῦτ’ ἂν ἴδοις σκηνῆς ἔνδον
χειροδάϊκτα σφάγι’ αἱμοβαφῆ,

κείνου χρηστήρια τἀνδρός.

ΧΟ. Οἵαν ἐδήλωσας Str.
ἀνέρος αἴθονος ἀγγελίαν
ἄτλατον οὐδὲ φευκτάν,
τῶν μεγάλων Δαναῶν ὕπο κληζομέναν,
τὰν ὁ μέγας μῦθος ἀέξει.
Ὤιμοι φοβοῦμαι τὸ προσέρπον· περίφαντος ἀνὴρ
θανεῖται, παραπλήκτῳ χερὶ συγκατακτὰς
κελαινοῖς ξίφεσιν βοτὰ καὶ βοτῆρας ἱπποκώμας.

ΤΕ. Ὤιμοι· κεῖθεν κεῖθεν ἄρ’ ἡμῖν
δεσμῶτιν ἄγων ἦλυθε ποίμναν·
ὧν τὴν μὲν ἔσω σφάζ’ ἐπὶ γαίας,
τὰ δὲ πλευροκοπῶν δίχ’ ἀνερρήγνυ·
δύο δ’ ἀργίποδας κριοὺς ἀνελών,
τοῦ μὲν κεφαλὴν καὶ γλῶσσαν ἄκραν
ῥιπτεῖ θερίσας, τὸν δ’ ὀρθὸν ἄνω
κίονι δήσας,
μέγαν ἱπποδέτην ῥυτῆρα λαβὼν
παίει λιγυρᾷ μάστιγι διπλῇ,
κακὰ δεννάζων ῥήμαθ’ ἃ δαίμων
κοὐδεὶς ἀνδρῶν ἐδίδαξεν.
ΧΟ. Ὥρα τιν’ ἤδη τοι Ant.
κρᾶτα καλύμμασι κρυψάμενον
ποδοῖν κλοπὰν ἀρέσθαι,
ἢ θοὸν εἰρεσίας ζυγὸν ἑζόμενον
ποντοπόρῳ ναῒ μεθεῖναι·
τοίας ἐρέσσουσιν ἀπειλὰς δικρατεῖς Ἀτρεῖδαι
καθ’ ἡμῶν· πεφόβημαι λιθόλευστον Ἄρη
ξυναλγεῖν μετὰ τοῦδε τυπείς, τὸν αἶσ’ ἄπλατος ἴσχει.

ΤΕ. Οὐκέτι· λαμπρᾶς γὰρ ἄτερ στεροπᾶς
ᾖξας ὀξὺς νότος ὡς λήγει,
καὶ νῦν φρόνιμος νέον ἄλγος ἔχει.
260 Τὸ γὰρ ἐσλεύσσειν οἰκεῖα πάθη,
μηδενὸς ἄλλου παραπράξαντος,
μεγάλας ὀδύνας ὑποτείνει.

ΧΟ. Ἀλλ’ εἰ πέπαυται, κάρτ’ ἂν εὐτυχεῖν δοκῶ·
φρούδου γὰρ ἤδη τοῦ κακοῦ μείων λόγος.
265 ΤΕ. Πότερα δ’ ἄν, εἰ νέμοι τις αἵρεσιν, λάβοις,
φίλους ἀνιῶν αὐτὸς ἡδονὰς ἔχειν
ἢ κοινὸς ἐν κοινοῖσι λυπεῖσθαι ξυνών;

ΧΟ. Τό τοι διπλάζον, ὦ γύναι, μεῖζον κακόν.

ΤΕ. Ἡμεῖς ἄρ’ οὐ νοσοῦντες ἀτώμεσθα νῦν.
270 ΧΟ. Πῶς τοῦτ’ ἔλεξας; οὐ κάτοιδ’ ὅπως λέγεις.

ΤΕ. Ἀνὴρ ἐκεῖνος, ἡνίκ’ ἦν ἐν τῇ νόσῳ,
αὐτὸς μὲν ἤδεθ’ οἷσιν εἴχετ’ ἐν κακοῖς,
ἡμᾶς δὲ τοὺς φρονοῦντας ἡνία ξυνών·
νῦν δ’ ὡς ἔληξε κἀνέπνευσε τῆς νόσου,
275 κεῖνός τε λύπῃ πᾶς ἐλήλαται κακῇ,
ἡμεῖς θ’ ὁμοίως οὐδὲν ἧσσον ἢ πάρος.
Ἆρ’ ἔστι ταῦτα δὶς τόσ’ ἐξ ἁπλῶν κακά;

ΧΟ. Ξύμφημι δή σοι καὶ δέδοικα μὴ ‘κ θεοῦ

πληγή τις ἥκῃ. Πῶς γάρ, εἰ πεπαυμένος
280 μηδέν τι μᾶλλον ἢ νοσῶν εὐφραίνεται;

ΤΕ. Ὡς ὦδ’ ἐχόντων τῶνδ’ ἐπίστασθαί σε χρή.

ΧΟ. Τίς γάρ ποτ’ ἀρχὴ τοῦ κακοῦ προσέπτατο;
δήλωσον ἡμῖν τοῖς ξυναλγοῦσιν τύχας.

ΤΕ. Ἅπαν μαθήσῃ τοὔργον, ὡς κοινωνὸς ὤν.
285 Κεῖνος γὰρ ἄκρας νυκτός, ἡνίχ’ ἕσπεροι
λαμπτῆρες οὐκέτ’ ἦθον, ἄμφηκες λαβὼν
ἐμαίετ’ ἔγχος ἐξόδους ἕρπειν κενάς.
Κἀγὼ ‘πιπλήσσω καὶ λέγω· “Τί χρῆμα δρᾷς,
Αἴας; τί τήνδ’ ἄκλητος οὔθ’ ὑπ’ ἀγγέλων
290 κληθεὶς ἀφορμᾷς πεῖραν οὔτε του κλύων
σάλπιγγος; ἀλλὰ νῦν γε πᾶς εὕδει στρατός.”
Ὁ δ’ εἶπε πρός με βαί’, ἀεὶ δ’ ὑμνούμενα·
“Γύναι, γυναιξὶ κόσμον ἡ σιγὴ φέρει.”
Κἀγὼ μαθοῦσ’ ἔληξ’, ὁ δ’ ἐσσύθη μόνος·
295 καὶ τὰς ἐκεῖ μὲν οὐκ ἔχω λέγειν πάθας·
ἔσω δ’ ἐσῆλθε συνδέτους ἄγων ὁμοῦ
ταύρους, κύνας βοτῆρας, εὔκερών τ’ ἄγραν.
Καὶ τοὺς μὲν ηὐχένιζε, τοὺς δ’ ἄνω τρέπων
ἔσφαζε κἀρράχιζε, τοὺς δὲ δεσμίους
300 ἠκίζεθ’ ὥστε φῶτας ἐν ποίμναις πίτνων.
Τέλος δ’ ἀπᾴξας διὰ θυρῶν σκιᾷ τινι
λόγους ἀνέσπα τοὺς μὲν Ἀτρειδῶν κάτα,
τοὺς δ’ ἀμφ’ Ὀδυσσεῖ, συντιθεὶς γέλων πολύν,
ὅσην κατ’ αὐτῶν ὕβριν ἐκτείσαιτ’ ἰών·
305 κἄπειτ’ ἀπᾴξας αὖθις ἐς δόμους πάλιν
ἔμφρων μόλις πως ξὺν χρόνῳ καθίσταται.
Καὶ πλῆρες ἄτης ὡς διοπτεύει στέγος,

παίσας κάρα θώϋξεν· ἐν δ’ ἐρειπίοις
νεκρῶν ἐρειφθεὶς ἕζετ’ ἀρνείου φόνου,
κόμην ἀπρὶξ ὄνυξι συλλαβὼν χερί.
Καὶ τὸν μὲν ἦστο πλεῖστον ἄφθογγος χρόνον·
ἔπειτ’ ἐμοὶ τὰ δείν’ ἐπηπείλησ’ ἔπη,
εἰ μὴ φανοίην πᾶν τὸ συντυχὸν πάθος,
κἀνήρετ’ ἐν τῷ πράγματος κυροῖ ποτε.
Κἀγώ, φίλοι, δείσασα τοὐξειργασμένον
ἔλεξα πᾶν ὅσονπερ ἐξηπιστάμην.
Ὁ δ’ εὐθὺς ἐξώμωξεν οἰμωγὰς λυγράς,
ἃς οὔποτ’ αὐτοῦ πρόσθεν εἰσήκουσ’ ἐγώ·
πρὸς γὰρ κακοῦ τε καὶ βαρυψύχου γόους
τοιούσδ’ ἀεί ποτ’ ἀνδρὸς ἐξηγεῖτ’ ἔχειν·
ἀλλ’ ἀψόφητος ὀξέων κωκυμάτων
ὑπεστέναζε, ταῦρος ὡς βρυχώμενος.
Νῦν δ’ ἐν τοιᾷδε κείμενος κακῇ τύχῃ
ἄσιτος ἀνήρ, ἄποτος, ἐν μέσοις βοτοῖς
σιδηροκμῆσιν ἥσυχος θακεῖ πεσών·
καὶ δῆλός ἐστιν ὥς τι δρασείων κακόν·
τοιαῦτα γάρ πως καὶ λέγει κὠδύρεται.
Ἀλλ’, ὦ φίλοι, τούτων γὰρ οὕνεκ’ ἐστάλην,
ἀρήξατ’ εἰσελθόντες, εἰ δύνασθέ τι·
φίλων γὰρ οἱ τοιοίδε νικῶνται λόγοις.

ΧΟ. Τέκμησσα, δεινά, παῖ Τελεύταντος, λέγεις
ἡμῖν, τὸν ἄνδρα διαπεφοιβάσθαι κακοῖς.

ΑΙ. Ἰώ μοί μοι.

ΤΕ. Τάχ’, ὡς ἔοικε, μᾶλλον· ἢ οὐκ ἠκούσατε
Αἴαντος, οἵαν τήνδε θωύσσει βοήν;

ΑΙ. Ἰώ μοί μοι.

ΧΟ. Ἀνὴρ ἔοικεν ἢ νοσεῖν, ἢ τοῖς πάλαι
νοσήμασι ξυνοῦσι λυπεῖσθαι παρών.

ΑΙ. Ἰὼ παῖ παῖ.
340 ΤΕ. Ὤιμοι τάλαιν'· Εὐρύσακες, ἀμφὶ σοὶ βοᾷ.
Τί ποτε μενοινᾷ; ποῦ ποτ' εἶ; τάλαιν' ἐγώ.

ΑΙ. Τεῦκρον καλῶ· ποῦ Τεῦκρος; ἢ τὸν εἰσαεὶ
λεηλατήσει χρόνον; ἐγὼ δ' ἀπόλλυμαι.

ΧΟ. Ἀνὴρ φρονεῖν ἔοικεν· ἀλλ' ἀνοίγετε·
345 τάχ' ἄν τιν' αἰδῶ κἀπ' ἐμοὶ βλέψας λάβοι.

ΤΕ. Ἰδού, διοίγω· προσβλέπειν δ' ἔξεστί σοι
τὰ τοῦδε πράγη, καὐτὸς ὡς ἔχων κυρεῖ.

ΑΙ. Ἰὼ φίλοι ναυβάται, μόνοι ἐμῶν φίλων, Str. 1 .
350 μόνοι ‹ἔ›τ' ἐμμένοντες ὀρθῷ νόμῳ,
ἴδεσθέ μ' οἷον ἄρτι κῦμα φοινίας ὑπὸ ζάλης
ἀμφίδρομον κυκλεῖται.

ΧΟ. Οἴμ’ ὡς ἔοικας ὀρθὰ μαρτυρεῖν ἄγαν·
ΑΙ. δηλοῖ δὲ τοὔργον ὡς ἀφροντίστως ἔχει.

ΑΙ. Ἰὼ γένος ναΐας ἀρωγὸν τέχνας, Ant. 1 .
ἅλιον ὃς ἐπέβας ἐλίσσων πλάταν,
σέ τοι, σέ τοι μόνον δέδορκα πημονὰν ἐπαρκέσοντ’·
ἀλλά με συνδάϊξον.

ΧΟ. Εὔφημα φώνει· μὴ κακὸν κακῷ διδοὺς
ἄκος, πλέον τὸ πῆμα τῆς ἄτης τίθει.

ΑΙ. Ὁρᾷς τὸν θρασύν, τὸν εὐκάρδιον, Str. 2 .
τὸν ἐν δαΐοις ἄτρεστον μάχαις,
ἐν ἀφόβοις με θηρσὶ δεινὸν χέρας;
Οἴμοι γέλωτος, οἷον ὑβρίσθην ἄρα.

ΤΕ. Μή, δέσποτ’ Αἴας, λίσσομαί σ’, αὔδα τάδε.

ΑΙ. Οὐκ ἐκτός; οὐκ ἄψορρον ἐκνεμῇ πόδα;
Αἰαῖ αἰαῖ.

ΤΕ. Ὦ πρὸς θεῶν, ὕπεικε καὶ φρόνησον εὖ.

ΑΙ. Ὢ δύσμορος, ὃς χερὶ μὲν
μεθῆκα τοὺς ἀλάστορας,
ἐν δ’ ἐλίκεσσι βουσὶ καὶ
375 κλυτοῖς πεσὼν αἰπολίοις
ἐρεμνὸν αἷμ’ ἔδευσα.

ΧΟ. Τί δῆτ’ ἂν ἀλγοίης ἐπ’ ἐξειργασμένοις;
Οὐ γὰρ γένοιτ’ ἂν ταῦθ’ ὅπως οὐχ ὧδ’ ἔχειν.

ΑΙ. Ἰὼ πάνθ’ ὁρῶν, ἁπάντων τ’ ἀεὶ Ant. 2 .
380 κακῶν ὄργανον, τέκνον Λαρτίου,
κακοπινέστατόν τ’ ἄλημα στρατοῦ,
ἦ που πολὺν γέλωθ’ ὑφ’ ἡδονῆς ἄγεις.

ΧΟ. Ξὺν τῷ θεῷ πᾶς καὶ γελᾷ κὠδύρεται.

ΑΙ. Ἴδοιμι ‹μήν› νιν, καίπερ ὧδ’ ἀτώμενος.
385 Ἰώ μοί μοι.

ΧΟ. Μηδὲν μέγ’ εἴπῃς· οὐχ ὁρᾷς ἵν’ εἶ κακοῦ;

ΑΙ. Ὦ Ζεῦ, προγόνων προπάτωρ,

πῶς ἂν τὸν αἰμυλώτατον,
ἐχθρὸν ἄλημα, τούς τε δισ-
σάρχας ὀλέσσας βασιλῆς,
τέλος θάνοιμι καὐτός;

ΤΕ. Ὅταν κατεύχῃ ταῦθ’, ὁμοῦ κἀμοὶ θανεῖν
εὔχου· τί γὰρ δεῖ ζῆν με σοῦ τεθνηκότος;

ΑΙ. Ἰὼ
σκότος, ἐμὸν φάος, Str. 3 .
ἔρεβος ὦ φαεννότατον, ὡς ἐμοί,
ἔλεσθ’ ἔλεσθέ μ’ οἰκήτορα,
ἔλεσθέ μ’· οὔτε γὰρ θεῶν γένος
οὔθ’ ἀμερίων ἔτ’ ἄξιος
βλέπειν τιν’ εἰς ὄνασιν ἀνθρώπων.
Ἀλλά μ’ ἀ Διός ‹μ’› ἀλκίμα θεὸς
ὀλέθριον αἰκίζει.
Ποῖ τις οὖν φύγῃ; ποῖ μολὼν μενῶ
εἰ τὰ μὲν φθίνει, φίλοι τοῖσ‹ιν› ὁμοῦ
πέλας, μώραις δ’ ἄγραις προσκείμεθα;
πᾶς δὲ στρατὸς δίπαλτος ἄν με
χειρὶ φονεύοι.
ΤΕ. Ὦ δυστάλαινα, τοιάδ’ ἄνδρα χρήσιμον
φωνεῖν, ἃ πρόσθεν οὗτος οὐκ ἔτλη ποτ’ ἄν.

ΑΙ. ‹Ἰ›ὼ
πόροι ἁλίρροθοι Ant. 3 .
πάραλά τ’ ἄντρα καὶ νέμος ἐπάκτιον,
πολὺν πολύν με δαρόν τε δὴ
κατείχετ’ ἀμφὶ Τροίαν χρόνον·
ἀλλ’ οὐκέτι μ’, οὐκέτ’ ἀμπνοὰς
ἔχοντα· τοῦτό τις φρονῶν ἵστω.

Ὦ Σκαμάνδριοι γείτονες ῥοαί,
εὔφρονες Ἀργείοις,
οὐκέτ᾽ ἄνδρα μὴ τόνδ᾽ ἴδητ᾽, ἔπος
ἐξερέω μέγ᾽, οἷον οὔ τινα Τροία
στρατοῦ δέρχθη χθονὸς μολόντ᾽ ἀπὸ
Ἑλλανίδος· τανῦν δ᾽ ἄτιμος
ὧδε πρόκειται.

ΧΟ. Οὕτοι σ᾽ ἀπείργειν, οὐδ᾽ ὅπως ἐῶ λέγειν
ἔχω, κακοῖς τοιοῖσδε συμπεπτωκότα.
ΑΙ. Αἰαῖ· τίς ἄν ποτ᾽ ᾠεθ᾽ ὧδ᾽ ἐπώνυμον
τοὐμὸν ξυνοίσειν ὄνομα τοῖς ἐμοῖς κακοῖς;
νῦν γὰρ πάρεστι καὶ δὶς αἰάζειν ἐμοὶ
καὶ τρίς· τοιούτοις γὰρ κακοῖς ἐντυγχάνω·
ὅτου πατὴρ μὲν τῆσδ᾽ ἀπ᾽ Ἰδαίας χθονὸς
τὰ πρῶτα καλλιστεῖ᾽ ἀριστεύσας στρατοῦ
πρὸς οἶκον ἦλθε πᾶσαν εὔκλειαν φέρων·
ἐγὼ δ᾽ ὁ κείνου παῖς, τὸν αὐτὸν ἐς τόπον
Τροίας ἐπελθὼν οὐκ ἐλάσσονι σθένει,
οὐδ᾽ ἔργα μείω χειρὸς ἀρκέσας ἐμῆς,
ἄτιμος Ἀργείοισιν ὧδ᾽ ἀπόλλυμαι.
Καίτοι τοσοῦτόν γ᾽ ἐξεπίστασθαι δοκῶ·
εἰ ζῶν Ἀχιλλεὺς τῶν ὅπλων τῶν ὧν πέρι
κρίνειν ἔμελλε κράτος ἀριστείας τινί,
οὐκ ἄν τις αὖτ᾽ ἔμαρψεν ἄλλος ἀντ᾽ ἐμοῦ.
Νῦν δ᾽ αὖτ᾽ Ἀτρεῖδαι φωτὶ παντουργῷ φρένας
ἔπραξαν, ἀνδρὸς τοῦδ᾽ ἀπώσαντες κράτη·
κεἰ μὴ τόδ᾽ ὄμμα καὶ φρένες διάστροφοι
γνώμης ἀπῆξαν τῆς ἐμῆς, οὐκ ἄν ποτε
δίκην κατ᾽ ἄλλου φωτὸς ὧδ᾽ ἐψήφισαν.
Νῦν δ᾽ ἡ Διὸς γοργῶπις ἀδάματος θεὰ
ἤδη μ᾽ ἐπ᾽ αὐτοῖς χεῖρ᾽ ἐπευθύνοντ᾽ ἐμὴν
ἔσφηλεν ἐμβαλοῦσα λυσσώδη νόσον,
ὥστ᾽ ἐν τοιοῖσδε χεῖρας αἱμάξαι βοτοῖς·
κεῖνοι δ᾽ ἐπεγγελῶσιν ἐκπεφευγότες,
ἐμοῦ μὲν οὐχ ἑκόντος· εἰ δέ τις θεῶν

βλάπτοι, φύγοι γ’ ἂν χὠ κακὸς τὸν κρείσσονα.
Καὶ νῦν τί χρὴ δρᾶν; ὅστις ἐμφανῶς θεοῖς
ἐχθαίρομαι, μισεῖ δέ μ’ Ἑλλήνων στρατός,
ἔχθει δὲ Τροία πᾶσα καὶ πεδία τάδε.
460 Πότερα πρὸς οἴκους, ναυλόχους λιπὼν ἕδρας
μόνους τ’ Ἀτρείδας, πέλαγος Αἰγαῖον περῶ;
Καὶ ποῖον ὄμμα πατρὶ δηλώσω φανεὶς
Τελαμῶνι; πῶς με τλήσεταί ποτ’ εἰσιδεῖν
γυμνὸν φανέντα τῶν ἀριστείων ἄτερ,
465 ὧν αὐτὸς ἔσχε στέφανον εὐκλείας μέγαν;
Οὐκ ἔστι τοὔργον τλητόν. Ἀλλὰ δῆτ’ ἰὼν
πρὸς ἕρυμα Τρώων, ξυμπεσὼν μόνος μόνοις
καὶ δρῶν τι χρηστόν, εἶτα λοίσθιον θάνω;
Ἀλλ’ ὧδέ γ’ Ἀτρείδας ἂν εὐφράναιμί που.
470 Οὐκ ἔστι ταῦτα· πεῖρά τις ζητητέα
τοιάδ’ ἀφ’ ἧς γέροντι δηλώσω πατρὶ
μή τοι φύσιν γ’ ἄσπλαγχνος ἐκ κείνου γεγώς.
Αἰσχρὸν γὰρ ἄνδρα τοῦ μακροῦ χρῄζειν βίου,
κακοῖσιν ὅστις μηδὲν ἐξαλλάσσεται.
475 Τί γὰρ παρ’ ἦμαρ ἡμέρα τέρπειν ἔχει
προσθεῖσα κἀναθεῖσα τοῦ γε κατθανεῖν;
Οὐκ ἂν πριαίμην οὐδενὸς λόγου βροτὸν
ὅστις κεναῖσιν ἐλπίσιν θερμαίνεται·
ἀλλ’ ἢ καλῶς ζῆν ἢ καλῶς τεθνηκέναι
480 τὸν εὐγενῆ χρή. Πάντ’ ἀκήκοας λόγον.

ΧΟ. Οὐδεὶς ἐρεῖ ποθ’ ὡς ὑπόβλητον λόγον,
Αἴας, ἔλεξας, ἀλλὰ τῆς σαυτοῦ φρενός.
Παῦσαί γε μέντοι καὶ δὸς ἀνδράσιν φίλοις
γνώμης κρατῆσαι, τάσδε φροντίδας μεθείς.
485 ΤΕ. Ὦ δέσποτ’ Αἴας, τῆς ἀναγκαίας τύχης
οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν μεῖζον ἀνθρώποις κακόν.
Ἐγὼ δ’ ἐλευθέρου μὲν ἐξέφυν πατρός,
εἴπερ τινὸς σθένοντος ἐν πλούτῳ Φρυγῶν·
νῦν δ’ εἰμὶ δούλη· θεοῖς γὰρ ὦδ’ ἔδοξέ που
490 καὶ σῇ μάλιστα χειρί. Τοιγαροῦν, ἐπεὶ

τὸ σὸν λέχος ξυνῆλθον, εὖ φρονῶ τὰ σά·
καί σ’ ἀντιάζω πρός τ’ ἐφεστίου Διὸς
εὐνῆς τε τῆς σῆς, ᾗ συνηλλάχθης ἐμοί,
μή μ’ ἀξιώσῃς βάξιν ἀλγεινὴν λαβεῖν
τῶν σῶν ὑπ’ ἐχθρῶν, χειρίαν ἐφείς τινι.
Ἦι γὰρ θάνῃς σὺ καὶ τελευτήσας ἀφῇς,
ταύτῃ νόμιζε κἀμὲ τῇ τόθ’ ἡμέρᾳ
βίᾳ ξυναρπασθεῖσαν Ἀργείων ὕπο
ξὺν παιδὶ τῷ σῷ δουλίαν ἕξειν τροφήν.
Καί τις πικρὸν πρόσφθεγμα δεσποτῶν ἐρεῖ
λόγοις ἰάπτων· “Ἴδετε τὴν ὀμευνέτιν
Αἴαντος, ὃς μέγιστον ἴσχυσε στρατοῦ,
οἵας λατρείας ἀνθ’ ὅσου ζήλου τρέφει”.
Τοιαῦτ’ ἐρεῖ τις, κἀμὲ μὲν δαίμων ἐλᾷ,
σοὶ δ’ αἰσχρὰ τἄπη ταῦτα καὶ τῷ σῷ γένει.
Ἀλλ’ αἴδεσαι μὲν πατέρα τὸν σὸν ἐν λυγρῷ
γήρᾳ προλείπων, αἴδεσαι δὲ μητέρα
πολλῶν ἐτῶν κληροῦχον, ἥ σε πολλάκις
θεοῖς ἀρᾶται ζῶντα πρὸς δόμους μολεῖν·
οἴκτιρε δ’, ὦναξ, παῖδα τὸν σόν, εἰ νέας
τροφῆς στερηθεὶς σοῦ διοίσεται μόνος
ὑπ’ ὀρφανιστῶν μὴ φίλων, ὅσον κακὸν
κείνῳ τε κἀμοὶ τοῦθ’, ὅταν θάνῃς, νεμεῖς.
Ἐμοὶ γὰρ οὐκέτ’ ἔστιν εἰς ὅ τι βλέπω
πλὴν σοῦ· σὺ γάρ μοι πατρίδ’ ἦστωσας δορί·
καὶ μητέρ’ ἄλλη μοῖρα τὸν φύσαντά τε
καθεῖλεν Ἅιδου θανασίμους οἰκήτορας·
τίς δῆτ’ ἐμοὶ γένοιτ’ ἂν ἀντὶ σοῦ πατρίς;
τίς πλοῦτος; ἐν σοὶ πᾶσ’ ἔγωγε σῴζομαι.
Ἀλλ’ ἴσχε κἀμοῦ μνῆστιν· ἀνδρί τοι χρεὼν
μνήμην προσεῖναι, τερπνὸν εἴ τί που πάθῃ·
χάρις χάριν γάρ ἐστιν ἡ τίκτουσ’ ἀεί·
ὅτου δ’ ἀπορρεῖ μνῆστις εὖ πεπονθότος,
οὐκ ἂν λέγοιτ’ ἔθ’ οὗτος εὐγενὴς ἀνήρ.
ΧΟ. Αἴας, ἔχειν σ’ ἂν οἶκτον ὡς κἀγὼ φρενὶ
θέλοιμ’ ἄν· αἰνοίης γὰρ ἂν τὰ τῆσδ’ ἔπη.

ΑΙ. Καὶ κάρτ’ ἐπαίνου τεύξεται πρὸς γοῦν ἐμοῦ,
ἐὰν μόνον τὸ ταχθὲν εὖ τολμᾷ τελεῖν.

ΤΕ. Ἀλλ’ ὦ φίλ’ Αἴας, πάντ’ ἔγωγε πείσομαι.
ΑΙ. Κόμιζέ νύν μοι παῖδα τὸν ἐμόν, ὡς ἴδω.

ΤΕ. Καὶ μὴν φόβοισί γ’ αὐτὸν ἐξελυσάμην.

ΑΙ. Ἐν τοῖσδε τοῖς κακοῖσιν; ἢ τί μοι λέγεις;

ΤΕ. Μὴ σοί γέ που δύστηνος ἀντήσας θάνοι.

ΑΙ. Πρέπον γέ τἂν ἦν δαίμονος τοὐμοῦ τόδε.
ΤΕ. Ἀλλ’ οὖν ἐγὼ ‘φύλαξα τοῦτό γ’ ἀρκέσαι.

ΑΙ. Ἐπῆνεσ’ ἔργον καὶ πρόνοιαν ἣν ἔθου.

ΤΕ. Τί δῆτ’ ἂν ὡς ἐκ τῶνδ’ ἂν ὠφελοῖμί σε;

ΑΙ. Δός μοι προσειπεῖν αὐτὸν ἐμφανῆ τ’ ἰδεῖν.

ΤΕ. Καὶ μὴν πέλας γε προσπόλοις φυλάσσεται.
ΑΙ. Τί δῆτα μέλλει μὴ οὐ παρουσίαν ἔχειν;

ΤΕ. Ὦ παῖ, πατὴρ καλεῖ σε. Δεῦρο προσπόλων
ἄγ’ αὐτὸν ὅσπερ χερσὶν εὐθύνων κυρεῖς.

ΑΙ. Ἔρποντι φωνεῖς, ἢ λελειμμένῳ λόγων;

ΤΕ. Καὶ δὴ κομίζει προσπόλων ὅδ’ ἐγγύθεν.
ΑΙ. Αἶρ’ αὐτόν, αἶρε δεῦρο· ταρβήσει γὰρ οὔ,
νεοσφαγῆ που τόνδε προσλεύσσων φόνον,
εἴπερ δικαίως ἔστ’ ἐμὸς τὰ πατρόθεν.
Ἀλλ’ αὐτίκ’ ὠμοῖς αὐτὸν ἐν νόμοις πατρὸς
δεῖ πωλοδαμνεῖν κἀξομοιοῦσθαι φύσιν.
Ὦ παῖ, γένοιο πατρὸς εὐτυχέστερος,
τὰ δ’ ἄλλ’ ὅμοιος, καὶ γένοι’ ἂν οὐ κακός.
Καίτοι σε καὶ νῦν τοῦτό γε ζηλοῦν ἔχω,
ὀθούνεκ’ οὐδὲν τῶνδ’ ἐπαισθάνῃ κακῶν·
ἐν τῷ φρονεῖν γὰρ μηδὲν ἥδιστος βίος,
ἕως τὸ χαίρειν καὶ τὸ λυπεῖσθαι μάθῃς.
Ὅταν δ’ ἵκῃ πρὸς τοῦτο, δεῖ σ’ ὅπως πατρὸς
δείξεις ἐν ἐχθροῖς οἷος ἐξ οἵου ‘τράφης.
Τέως δὲ κούφοις πνεύμασιν βόσκου, νέαν
ψυχὴν ἀτάλλων, μητρὶ τῇδε χαρμονήν.
Οὗτοι σ’ Ἀχαιῶν, οἶδα, μή τις ὑβρίσῃ
στυγναῖσι λώβαις, οὐδὲ χωρὶς ὄντ’ ἐμοῦ·
τοῖον πυλωρὸν φύλακα Τεῦκρον ἀμφὶ σοὶ

λείψω τροφῆς ἄοκνον ἔμπα, κεἰ τανῦν
τηλωπὸς οἰχνεῖ, δυσμενῶν θήραν ἔχων.
Ἀλλ’, ἄνδρες ἀσπιστῆρες, ἐνάλιος λεώς,
ὑμῖν τε κοινὴν τήνδ’ ἐπισκήπτω χάριν,
κείνῳ τ’ ἐμὴν ἀγγείλατ’ ἐντολήν, ὅπως
τὸν παῖδα τόνδε πρὸς δόμους ἐμοὺς ἄγων
Τελαμῶνι δείξει μητρί τ’, Ἐριβοίᾳ λέγω,
ὡς σφιν γένηται γηροβοσκὸς εἰσαεὶ
μέχρις οὗ μυχοὺς κίχωσι τοῦ κάτω θεοῦ.
Καὶ τἀμὰ τεύχη μήτ’ ἀγωνάρχαι τινὲς
θήσουσ’ Ἀχαιοῖς, μήθ’ ὁ λυμεὼν ἐμός.
Ἀλλ’ αὐτό μοι σύ, παῖ, λαβὼν ἐπώνυμον,
Εὐρύσακες, ἴσχε διὰ πολυρράφου στρέφων
πόρπακος ἑπτάβοιον ἄρρηκτον σάκος·
τὰ δ’ ἄλλα τεύχη κοίν’ ἐμοὶ τεθάψεται.
Ἀλλ’ ὡς τάχος τὸν παῖδα τόνδ’ ἤδη δέχου,
καὶ δῶμα πάκτου, μηδ’ ἐπισκήνους γόους
δάκρυε· κάρτα τοι φιλοίκτιστον γυνή.
Πύκαζε θᾶσσον· οὐ πρὸς ἰατροῦ σοφοῦ
θρηνεῖν ἐπῳδὰς πρὸς τομῶντι πήματι.

ΧΟ. Δέδοικ’ ἀκούων τήνδε τὴν προθυμίαν·
οὐ γάρ μ’ ἀρέσκει γλῶσσά σου τεθηγμένη.
ΤΕ. Ὦ δέσποτ’ Αἴας, τί ποτε δρασείεις φρενί;

ΑΙ. Μὴ κρῖνε, μὴ ‘ξέταζε· σωφρονεῖν καλόν.

ΤΕ. Οἴμ’ ὡς ἀθυμῶ· καί σε πρὸς τοῦ σοῦ τέκνου
καὶ θεῶν ἱκνοῦμαι μὴ προδοὺς ἡμᾶς γένῃ.

ΑΙ. Ἄγαν γε λυπεῖς. Οὐ κάτοισθ’ ἐγὼ θεοῖς
ὡς οὐδὲν ἀρκεῖν εἰμ’ ὀφειλέτης ἔτι;

ΤΕ. Εὔφημα φώνει.

ΑΙ. Τοῖς ἀκούουσιν λέγε.

ΤΕ. Σὺ δ’ οὐχὶ πείσῃ;

ΑΙ. Πόλλ’ ἄγαν ἤδη θροεῖς.

ΤΕ. Ταρβῶ γάρ, ὦναξ.

ΑΙ. Οὐ ξυνέρξεθ’ ὡς τάχος;

ΤΕ. Πρὸς θεῶν, μαλάσσου.

ΑΙ. Μῶρά μοι δοκεῖς φρονεῖν,
εἰ τοὐμὸν ἦθος ἄρτι παιδεύειν νοεῖς.

ΧΟ. Ὦ κλεινὰ Σαλαμίς, σὺ μέν που Str. 1 .
ναίεις ἁλίπλακτος εὐδαίμων,
πᾶσιν περίφαντος αἰεί.
600 ἐγὼ δ’ ὁ τλάμων παλαιὸς ἀφ’ οὗ χρόνος
Ἰδαῖα μίμνων λειμώνι’ ἔπαυλα μηνῶν
ἀνήριθμος αἰὲν εὐνῶμαι
605 χρόνῳ τρυχόμενος, κακὰν ἐλπίδ’ ἔχων
ἔτι μέ ποτ’ ἀνύσειν τὸν ἀπότροπον ἀΐδηλον Ἅιδαν.
Καί μοι δυσθεράπευτος Αἴας Ant. 1 .
610 ξύνεστιν ἔφεδρος, ὤμοι μοι,
θεία μανίᾳ ξύναυλος
ὃν ἐξεπέμψω πρὶν δή ποτε θουρίῳ
κρατοῦντ’ ἐν Ἄρει· νῦν δ’ αὖ φρενὸς οἰοβώτας
615 φίλοις μέγα πένθος ηὕρηται.
Τὰ πρὶν δ’ ἔργα χεροῖν μεγίστας ἀρετᾶς
ἄφιλα παρ’ ἀφίλοις ἔπεσ’ ἔπεσε μελέοις Ἀτρείδαις.
620
Ἦ που παλαιᾷ μὲν ἔντροφος ἀμέρᾳ, Str. 2 .
625 λευκῷ δὲ γήρᾳ μάτηρ νιν ὅταν νοσοῦντα
φρενομόρως ἀκούσῃ,
αἴλινον αἴλινον
οὐδ’ οἰκτρᾶς γόον ὄρνιθος ἀηδοῦς
630 ἥσει δύσμορος, ἀλλ’ ὀξυτόνους μὲν ᾠδὰς
θρηνήσει, χερόπλακτοι δ’ ἐν στέρνοισι πεσοῦνται
δοῦποι καὶ πολιᾶς ἄμυγμα χαίτας.
635 Κρείσσων γὰρ Ἅιδᾳ κεύθων ὁ νοσῶν μάταν, Ant. 2 .
ὃς ἐκ πατρῴας ἥκων γενεᾶς ἄριστος
πολυπόνων Ἀχαιῶν,
οὐκέτι συντρόφοις
640 ὀργαῖς ἔμπεδος, ἀλλ’ ἐκτὸς ὁμιλεῖ.
Ὦ τλᾶμον πάτερ, οἷαν σε μένει πυθέσθαι
παιδὸς δύσφορον ἄταν, ἂν οὔπω τις ἔθρεψεν
645 δίων Αἰακιδᾶν ἄτερθε τοῦδε.

ΑΙ. Ἅπανθ’ ὁ μακρὸς κἀναρίθμητος χρόνος
φύει τ’ ἄδηλα καὶ φανέντα κρύπτεται·
κοὐκ ἔστ’ ἄελπτον οὐδέν, ἀλλ’ ἀλίσκεται
χὠ δεινὸς ὅρκος χαὶ περισκελεῖς φρένες.
Κἀγὼ γάρ, ὃς τὰ δείν’ ἐκαρτέρουν τότε,
βαφῇ σίδηρος ὥς, ἐθηλύνθην στόμα
πρὸς τῆσδε τῆς γυναικός· οἰκτίρω δέ νιν
χήραν παρ’ ἐχθροῖς παῖδά τ’ ὀρφανὸν λιπεῖν.
Ἀλλ’ εἶμι πρός τε λουτρὰ καὶ παρακτίους
λειμῶνας, ὡς ἂν λύμαθ’ ἁγνίσας ἐμὰ
μῆνιν βαρεῖαν ἐξαλύξωμαι θεᾶς·
μολών τε χῶρον ἔνθ’ ἂν ἀστιβῆ κίχω,
κρύψω τόδ’ ἔγχος τοὐμόν, ἔχθιστον βελῶν,
γαίας ὀρύξας ἔνθα μή τις ὄψεται·
ἀλλ’ αὐτὸ νὺξ Ἅιδης τε σῳζόντων κάτω.
Ἐγὼ γάρ, ἐξ οὗ χειρὶ τοῦτ’ ἐδεξάμην
παρ’ Ἕκτορος δώρημα δυσμενεστάτου,
οὔπω τι κεδνὸν ἔσχον Ἀργείων πάρα·
ἀλλ’ ἔστ’ ἀληθὴς ἡ βροτῶν παροιμία·
ἐχθρῶν ἄδωρα δῶρα κοὐκ ὀνήσιμα.
Τοιγὰρ τὸ λοιπὸν εἰσόμεσθα μὲν θεοῖς
εἴκειν, μαθησόμεσθα δ’ Ἀτρείδας σέβειν.
Ἄρχοντές εἰσιν, ὥσθ’ ὑπεικτέον· τί μή;
Καὶ γὰρ τὰ δεινὰ καὶ τὰ καρτερώτατα
τιμαῖς ὑπείκει· τοῦτο μὲν νιφοστιβεῖς
χειμῶνες ἐκχωροῦσιν εὐκάρπῳ θέρει·
ἐξίσταται δὲ νυκτὸς αἰανὴς κύκλος
τῇ λευκοπώλῳ φέγγος ἡμέρᾳ φλέγειν·
δεινῶν τ’ ἄημα πνευμάτων ἐκοίμισε
στένοντα πόντον· ἐν δ’ ὁ παγκρατὴς ὕπνος
λύει πεδήσας, οὐδ’ ἀεὶ λαβὼν ἔχει·
ἡμεῖς δὲ πῶς οὐ γνωσόμεσθα σωφρονεῖν;
Ἐγὼ δ’, ἐπίσταμαι γὰρ ἀρτίως ὅτι
ὅ τ’ ἐχθρὸς ἡμῖν ἐς τοσόνδ’ ἐχθαρτέος,
ὡς καὶ φιλήσων αὖθις, ἔς τε τὸν φίλον
τοσαῦθ’ ὑπουργῶν ὠφελεῖν βουλήσομαι,
ὡς αἰὲν οὐ μενοῦντα· τοῖς πολλοῖσι γὰρ
βροτῶν ἄπιστός ἐσθ’ ἑταιρείας λιμήν.

Ἀλλ’ ἀμφὶ μὲν τούτοισιν εὖ σχήσει. Σὺ δὲ
ἔσω θεοῖς ἐλθοῦσα διὰ τέλους, γύναι,
εὔχου τελεῖσθαι τοὐμὸν ὧν ἐρᾷ κέαρ.
Ὑμεῖς θ’, ἑταῖροι, ταὐτὰ τῇδέ μοι τάδε
τιμᾶτε, Τεύκρῳ τ’, ἢν μόλῃ, σημήνατε
μέλειν μὲν ἡμῶν, εὐνοεῖν δ’ ὑμῖν ἅμα.
Ἐγὼ γὰρ εἶμ’ ἐκεῖσ’ ὅποι πορευτέον·
ὑμεῖς δ’ ἃ φράζω δρᾶτε, καὶ τάχ’ ἄν μ’ ἴσως
πύθοισθε, κεἰ νῦν δυστυχῶ, σεσωσμένον.

ΧΟ. Ἔφριξ’ ἔρωτι, περιχαρὴς δ’ ἀνεπτάμαν. Str.
Ἰὼ ἰώ, Πὰν Πάν,
ὦ Πάν, Πὰν ἁλίπλαγκτε, Κυλ-
λανίας χιονοκτύπου
πετραίας ἀπὸ δειράδος φάνηθ’, ὤ,
θεῶν χοροποί’, ἄναξ, ὅπως μοι
Νύσια Κνώσι’ ὀρ-
χήματ’ αὐτοδαῆ ξυνὼν ἰάψῃς.
Νῦν γὰρ ἐμοὶ μέλει χορεῦσαι.
Ἰκαρίων δ’ ὑπὲρ πελαγέων μο-
λὼν ἄναξ Ἀπόλλων
ὁ Δάλιος εὔγνωστος
ἐμοὶ ξυνείη διὰ παντὸς εὔφρων.
Ἔλυσεν αἰνὸν ἄχος ἀπ’ ὀμμάτων Ἄρησ. Ant.
Ἰὼ ἰώ. Νῦν αὖ,
νῦν, ὦ Ζεῦ, πάρα λευκὸν εὐ-
άμερον πελάσαι φάος
θοᾶν ὠκυάλων νεῶν, ὅτ’ Αἴας
λαθίπονος πάλιν, θεῶν δ’ αὖ
πάνθυτα θέσμι’ ἐξ-
ήνυσ’ εὐνομίᾳ σέβων μεγίστᾳ.
Πάνθ’ ὁ μέγας χρόνος μαραίνει
κοὐδὲν ἀναύδατον φατίσαιμ’ ἄν,
εὖτέ γ’ ἐξ ἀέλπτων
Αἴας μετανεγνώσθη
θυμῶν Ἀτρείδαις μεγάλων τε νεικέων.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
Ἄνδρες φίλοι, τὸ πρῶτον ἀγγεῖλαι θέλω·
Τεῦκρος πάρεστιν ἄρτι Μυσίων ἀπὸ
κρημνῶν· μέσον δὲ προσμολὼν στρατήγιον
κυδάζεται τοῖς πᾶσιν Ἀργείοις ὁμοῦ.
Στείχοντα γὰρ πρόσωθεν αὐτὸν ἐν κύκλῳ
μαθόντες ἀμφέστησαν, εἶτ’ ὀνείδεσιν
ἤρασσον ἔνθεν κἄνθεν οὔτις ἔσθ’ ὃς οὔ,
τὸν τοῦ μανέντος κἀπιβουλευτοῦ στρατοῦ
ξύναιμον ἀποκαλοῦντες, ὡς οὐκ ἀρκέσοι
τὸ μὴ οὐ πέτροισι πᾶς καταξανθεὶς θανεῖν.
Ὥστ’ εἰς τοσοῦτον ἦλθον ὥστε καὶ χεροῖν
κολεῶν ἐρυστὰ διεπεραιώθη ξίφη.
Λήγει δ’ ἔρις δραμοῦσα τοῦ προσωτάτω
ἀνδρῶν γερόντων ἐν ξυναλλαγῇ λόγου.
Ἀλλ’ ἡμὶν Αἴας ποῦ ‘στιν, ὡς φράσω τάδε;
τοῖς κυρίοις γὰρ πάντα χρὴ δηλοῦν λόγον.
ΧΟ. Οὐκ ἔνδον, ἀλλὰ φροῦδος ἀρτίως, νέας
βουλὰς νέοισιν ἐγκαταζεύξας τρόποις.

ΑΓ. Ἰοὺ ἰού·
βραδεῖαν ἡμᾶς ἆρ’ ὁ τήνδε τὴν ὁδὸν
πέμπων ἔπεμψεν, ἢ ‘φάνην ἐγὼ βραδύς.
ΧΟ. Τί δ’ ἐστὶ χρείας τῆσδ’ ὑπεσπανισμένον;

ΑΓ. Τὸν ἄνδρ’ ἀπηύδα Τεῦκρος ἔνδοθεν στέγης
μὴ ‘ξω παρήκειν, πρὶν παρὼν αὐτὸς τύχῃ.

ΧΟ. Ἀλλ’ οἴχεταί τοι πρὸς τὸ κέρδιστον τραπεὶς

γνώμης, θεοῖσιν ὡς καταλλαχθῇ χόλου.
ΑΓ. Ταῦτ’ ἐστὶ τἄπη μωρίας πολλῆς πλέα,
εἴπερ τι Κάλχας εὖ φρονῶν μαντεύεται.

ΧΟ. Ποῖον; τί δ’ εἰδὼς τοῦδε πράγματος πέρι -

ΑΓ. Τοσοῦτον οἶδα καὶ παρὼν ἐτύγχανον·
ἐκ γὰρ συνέδρου καὶ τυραννικοῦ κύκλου
Κάλχας μεταστὰς οἷος Ἀτρειδῶν δίχα,
εἰς χεῖρα Τεύκρου δεξιὰν φιλοφρόνως
θεὶς εἶπε κἀπέσκηψε παντοίᾳ τέχνῃ
εἶρξαι κατ’ ἦμαρ τοὐμφανὲς τὸ νῦν τόδε
Αἴανθ’ ὑπὸ σκηναῖσι μηδ’ ἀφέντ’ ἐᾶν,
εἰ ζῶντ’ ἐκεῖνον εἰσιδεῖν θέλοι ποτέ·
ἐλᾷ γὰρ αὐτὸν τῇδε θἠμέρᾳ μόνῃ
δίας Ἀθάνας μῆνις, ὡς ἔφη λέγων.
Τὰ γὰρ περισσὰ κἀνόνητα σώματα
πίπτειν βαρείαις πρὸς θεῶν δυσπραξίαις
ἔφασχ’ ὁ μάντις, ὅστις ἀνθρώπου φύσιν
βλαστὼν ἔπειτα μὴ κατ’ ἄνθρωπον φρονῇ.
Κεῖνος δ’ ἀπ’ οἴκων εὐθὺς ἐξορμώμενος
ἄνους καλῶς λέγοντος ηὑρέθη πατρός.
Ὁ μὲν γὰρ αὐτὸν ἐννέπει· “Τέκνον, δορὶ
βούλου κρατεῖν μέν, σὺν θεῷ δ’ ἀεὶ κρατεῖν”·
ὁ δ’ ὑψικόμπως κἀφρόνως ἠμείψατο·
“Πάτερ, θεοῖς μὲν κἂν ὁ μηδὲν ὢν ὁμοῦ
κράτος κατακτήσαιτ’· ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ δίχα
κείνων πέποιθα τοῦτ’ ἐπισπάσειν κλέος”.
Τοσόνδ’ ἐκόμπει μῦθον. Εἶτα δεύτερον
δίας Ἀθάνας, ἡνίκ’ ὀτρύνουσά νιν
ηὐδᾶτ’ ἐπ’ ἐχθροῖς χεῖρα φοινίαν τρέπειν,
τότ’ ἀντιφωνεῖ δεινὸν ἄρρητόν τ’ ἔπος·
“Ἄνασσα, τοῖς ἄλλοισιν Ἀργείων πέλας
ἵστω, καθ’ ἡμᾶς δ’ οὔποτ’ ἐκρήξει μάχη”.

Τοιοῖσδέ τοι λόγοισιν ἀστεργῆ θεᾶς
ἐκτήσατ᾽ ὀργήν, οὐ κατ᾽ ἄνθρωπον φρονῶν.
Ἀλλ᾽ εἴπερ ἔστι τῇδε θἠμέρᾳ, τάχ᾽ ἂν
γενοίμεθ᾽ αὐτοῦ σὺν θεῷ σωτήριοι.
780 Τοσαῦθ᾽ ὁ μάντις εἶφ᾽· ὁ δ᾽ εὐθὺς ἐξ ἕδρας
πέμπει με σοὶ φέροντα τάσδ᾽ ἐπιστολὰς
Τεῦκρος φυλάσσειν. Εἰ δ᾽ ἀπεστερήμεθα,
οὐκ ἔστιν ἀνὴρ κεῖνος, εἰ Κάλχας σοφός.

ΧΟ. Ὦ δαΐα Τέκμησσα, δύσμορον γένος,
785 ὅρα μολοῦσα τόνδ᾽ ὁποῖ᾽ ἔπη θροεῖ·
ξυρεῖ γὰρ ἐν χρῷ τοῦτο, μὴ χαίρειν τινά.

ΤΕ. Τί μ᾽ αὖ τάλαιναν, ἀρτίως πεπαυμένην
κακῶν ἀτρύτων, ἐξ ἕδρας ἀνίστατε;

ΧΟ. Τοῦδ᾽ εἰσάκουε τἀνδρός, ὡς ἥκει φέρων
790 Αἴαντος ἡμῖν πρᾶξιν ἣν ἤλγησ᾽ ἐγώ.

ΤΕ. Οἴμοι, τί φῄς, ἄνθρωπε; μῶν ὀλώλαμεν;

ΑΓ. Οὐκ οἶδα τὴν σὴν πρᾶξιν, Αἴαντος δ᾽ ὅτι,
θυραῖος εἴπερ ἐστίν, οὐ θαρσῶ πέρι.

ΤΕ. Καὶ μὴν θυραῖος, ὥστε μ᾽ ὠδίνειν τί φῄς.

ΑΓ. Ἐκεῖνον εἴργειν Τεῦκρος ἐξεφίεται
σκηνῆς ὕπαυλον, μηδ’ ἀφιέναι μόνον.

ΤΕ. Ποῦ δ’ ἐστὶ Τεῦκρος, κἀπὶ τῷ λέγει τάδε;

ΑΓ. Πάρεστ’ ἐκεῖνος ἄρτι· τήνδε δ’ ἔξοδον
ὀλεθρίαν Αἴαντος ἐλπίζει ῥέπειν.
ΤΕ. Οἴμοι τάλαινα, τοῦ ποτ’ ἀνθρώπων μαθών;

ΑΓ. Τοῦ Θεστορείου μάντεως, καθ’ ἡμέραν
τὴν νῦν, ὅτ’ αὐτῷ θάνατον ἢ βίον φέρει.

ΤΕ. Οἰ ‘γώ, φίλοι, πρόστητ’ ἀναγκαίας τύχης,
καὶ σπεύσαθ’ οἱ μὲν Τεῦκρον ἐν τάχει μολεῖν·
οἱ δ’ ἐσπέρους ἀγκῶνας, οἱ δ’ ἀντηλίους
ζητεῖτ’ ἰόντες τἀνδρὸς ἔξοδον κακήν.
Ἔγνωκα γὰρ δὴ φωτὸς ἠπατημένη
καὶ τῆς παλαιᾶς χάριτος ἐκβεβλημένη.
Οἴμοι, τί δράσω, τέκνον; οὐχ ἱδρυτέον.
Ἀλλ’ εἶμι κἀγὼ κεῖσ’ ὅποιπερ ἂν σθένω.
Χωρῶμεν, ἐγκονῶμεν· οὐχ ἕδρας ἀκμὴ
σῴζειν θέλοντας ἄνδρα γ’ ὃς σπεύδῃ θανεῖν.

ΧΟ. Χωρεῖν ἕτοιμος, κοὐ λόγῳ δείξω μόνον·
τάχος γὰρ ἔργου καὶ ποδῶν ἅμ’ ἕψεται.
ΑΙ. Ὁ μὲν σφαγεὺς ἕστηκεν ᾗ τομώτατος
γένοιτ’ ἄν, εἴ τῳ καὶ λογίζεσθαι σχολή,

δῶρον μὲν ἀνδρὸς Ἕκτορος ξένων ἐμοὶ
μάλιστα μισηθέντος, ἐχθίστου θ’ ὁρᾶν·
πέπηγε δ’ ἐν γῇ πολεμίᾳ τῇ Τρῳάδι,
820 σιδηροβρῶτι θηγάνῃ νεηκονής·
ἔπηξα δ’ αὐτὸν εὖ περιστείλας ἐγὼ
εὐνούστατον τῷδ’ ἀνδρὶ διὰ τάχους θανεῖν.
Οὕτω μὲν εὐσκευοῦμεν· ἐκ δὲ τῶνδέ μοι
σὺ πρῶτος, ὦ Ζεῦ, καὶ γὰρ εἰκός, ἄρκεσον.
825 Αἰτήσομαι δέ σ’ οὐ μακρὸν γέρας λαχεῖν·
πέμψον τιν’ ἡμῖν ἄγγελον, κακὴν φάτιν
Τεύκρῳ φέροντα, πρῶτος ὡς με βαστάσῃ
πεπτῶτα τῷδε περὶ νεορράντῳ ξίφει,
καὶ μὴ πρὸς ἐχθρῶν του κατοπτευθεὶς πάρος
830 ῥιφθῶ κυσὶν πρόβλητος οἰωνοῖς θ’ ἕλωρ.
Τοσαῦτά σ’, ὦ Ζεῦ, προστρέπω· καλῶ δ’ ἅμα
πομπαῖον Ἑρμῆν χθόνιον εὖ με κοιμίσαι,
ξὺν ἀσφαδάστῳ καὶ ταχεῖ πηδήματι
πλευρὰν διαρρήξαντα τῷδε φασγάνῳ.
835 Καλῶ δ’ ἀρωγοὺς τὰς ἀεί τε παρθένους
ἀεί θ’ ὁρώσας πάντα τἀν βροτοῖς πάθη,
σεμνὰς Ἐρινῦς τανύποδας μαθεῖν ἐμὲ
πρὸς τῶν Ἀτρειδῶν ὡς διόλλυμαι τάλας.
Καί σφας κακοὺς κάκιστα καὶ πανωλέθρους
840 ξυναρπάσειαν, ὥσπερ εἰσορῶσ’ ἐμὲ
αὐτοσφαγῆ πίπτοντα, τὼς αὐτοσφαγεῖς
πρὸς τῶν φιλίστων ἐκγόνων ὀλοίατο.
Ἴτ’, ὦ ταχεῖαι ποίνιμοί τ’ Ἐρινύες,
γεύεσθε, μὴ φείδεσθε πανδήμου στρατοῦ.
845 Σὺ δ’, ὦ τὸν αἰπὺν οὐρανὸν διφρηλατῶν
Ἥλιε, πατρῴαν τὴν ἐμὴν ὅταν χθόνα
ἴδῃς, ἐπισχὼν χρυσόνωτον ἡνίαν
ἄγγειλον ἅτας τὰς ἐμὰς μόρον τ’ ἐμὸν
γέροντι πατρὶ τῇ τε δυστήνῳ τροφῷ.
850 Ἢ που τάλαινα, τήνδ’ ὅταν κλύῃ φάτιν,
ἥσει μέγαν κωκυτὸν ἐν πάσῃ πόλει.
Ἀλλ’ οὐδὲν ἔργον ταῦτα θρηνεῖσθαι μάτην,
ἀλλ’ ἀρκτέον τὸ πρᾶγμα σὺν τάχει τινί.
Ὦ Θάνατε, Θάνατε, νῦν μ’ ἐπίσκεψαι μολών·
855 καίτοι σὲ μὲν κἀκεῖ προσαυδήσω ξυνών·

σὲ δ’, ὦ φαεννῆς ἡμέρας τὸ νῦν σέλας,
καὶ τὸν διφρευτὴν Ἥλιον προσεννέπω,
πανύστατον δή, κοὔποτ’ αὖθις ὕστερον.
Ὦ φέγγος, ὦ γῆς ἱερὸν οἰκείας πέδον
860 Σαλαμῖνος, ὦ πατρῷον ἑστίας βάθρον,
κλειναί τ’ Ἀθῆναι, καὶ τὸ σύντροφον γένος,
κρῆναί τε ποταμοί θ’ οἵδε, καὶ τὰ Τρωϊκὰ
πεδία προσαυδῶ, χαίρετ’, ὦ τροφῆς ἐμοί·
τοῦθ’ ὑμὶν Αἴας τοὔπος ὕστατον θροεῖ,
865 τὰ δ’ ἄλλ’ ἐν Ἅιδου τοῖς κάτω μυθήσομαι.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Α΄
Πόνος πόνῳ πόνον φέρει·
πᾷ πᾷ
πᾷ γὰρ οὐκ ἔβαν ἐγώ;
κοὐδεὶς ἐπίσταταί με συμμαθεῖν τόπος.
870 Ἰδοὺ ἰδού,
δοῦπον αὖ κλύω τινά.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Β΄
Ἡμῶν γε ναὸς κοινόπλουν ὁμιλίαν.
Α΄ Τί οὖν δή;
Β΄ Πᾶν ἐστίβηται πλευρὸν ἕσπερον νεῶν.
875 Α΄ Ἔχεις οὖν;
Β΄ Πόνου γε πλῆθος, κοὐδὲν εἰς ὄψιν πλέον.
Α΄ Ἀλλ’ οὐδὲ μὲν δὴ τὴν ἀφ’ ἡλίου βολῶν
κέλευθον ἀνὴρ οὐδαμοῦ δηλοῖ φανείς.

ΧΟ. Τίς ἂν δῆ‹τά› μοι, τίς ἂν φιλοπόνων Str.
880 ἁλιαδᾶν ἔχων ἀΰπνους ἄγρας,
ἢ τίς Ὀλυμπιάδων θεᾶν, ἢ ῥυτῶν
Βοσπορίων ποταμῶν,

τὸν ὠμόθυμον εἴ ποθι
πλαζόμενον λεύσσων
ἀπύοι; σχέτλια γὰρ
ἐμέ γε τὸν μακρῶν ἀλάταν πόνων
οὐρίῳ μὴ πελάσαι δρόμῳ,
ἀλλ’ ἀμενηνὸν ἄνδρα μὴ λεύσσειν ὅπου.

ΤΕ. Ἰώ μοί μοι.

ΧΟ. Τίνος βοὴ πάραυλος ἐξέβη νάπους;

ΤΕ. Ἰὼ τλήμων.

ΧΟ. Τὴν δουρίληπτον δύσμορον νύμφην ὁρῶ
Τέκμησσαν, οἴκτῳ τῷδε συγκεκραμένην.

ΤΕ. Οἴχωκ’, ὄλωλα, διαπεπόρθημαι, φίλοι.

ΧΟ. Τί δ’ ἔστιν;

ΤΕ. Αἴας ὅδ’ ἡμῖν ἀρτίως νεοσφαγὴς
κεῖται κρυφαίῳ φασγάνῳ περιπτυχής.
ΧΟ. Ὤμοι ἐμῶν νόστων·

ὤμοι, κατέπεφνες, ἄναξ,
τόνδε συνναύταν, τάλας·
ὦ ταλαίφρων γύναι.

ΤΕ. Ὡς ὦδε τοῦδ’ ἔχοντος αἰάζειν πάρα.
905 ΧΟ. Τίνος ποτ’ ἆρ’ ἔπραξε χειρὶ δύσμορος;

ΤΕ. Αὐτὸς πρὸς αὑτοῦ· δῆλον. Ἐν γάρ οἱ χθονὶ
πηκτὸν τόδ’ ἔγχος περιπετὲς κατηγορεῖ.

ΧΟ. Ὤμοι ἐμᾶς ἄτας, οἷος ἄρ’ αἱμάχθης,
910 ἄφαρκτος φίλων·
ἐγὼ δ’ ὁ πάντα κωφός, ὁ πάντ’ ἄϊδρις,
κατημέλησα· πᾷ πᾷ
κεῖται ὁ δυστράπελος
δυσώνυμος Αἴας;
915 ΤΕ. Οὗτοι θεατός· ἀλλά νιν περιπτυχεῖ
φάρει καλύψω τῷδε παμπήδην, ἐπεὶ
οὐδεὶς ἂν ὅστις καὶ φίλος τλαίη βλέπειν
φυσῶντ’ ἄνω πρὸς ῥῖνας ἔκ τε φοινίας
πληγῆς μελανθὲν αἷμ’ ἀπ’ οἰκείας σφαγῆς.
920 Οἴμοι, τί δράσω; τίς σε βαστάσει φίλων;
Ποῦ Τεῦκρος; ὡς ἀκμαῖος, εἰ βαίη, μόλοι,
πεπτῶτ’ ἀδελφὸν τόνδε συγκαθαρμόσαι.
Ὦ δύσμορ’ Αἴας, οἷος ὢν οἵως ἔχεις,
ὡς καὶ παρ’ ἐχθροῖς ἄξιος θρήνων τυχεῖν.
925 ΧΟ. Ἔμελλες, τάλας, ἔμελλες χρόνῳ Ant.
στερεόφρων ἄρ’ ἐξανύσσειν κακὰν
μοῖραν ἀπειρεσίων πόνων. Τοῖά μοι
πάννυχα καὶ φαέθοντ’
930 ἀνεστέναζες ὠμόφρων
ἐχθοδόπ’ Ἀτρείδαις

οὐλίῳ σὺν πάθει.
Μέγας ἄρ’ ἦν ἐκεῖνος ἄρχων χρόνος
935 πημάτων, ἧμος ἀριστόχειρ
‹οὐλομένων› ὅπλων ἔκειθ’ ἁγὼν πέρι.

ΤΕ. Ἰώ μοί μοι.

ΧΟ. Χωρεῖ πρὸς ἦπαρ, οἶδα, γενναία δύη.

ΤΕ. Ἰώ μοί μοι.
940 ΧΟ. Οὐδέν σ’ ἀπιστῶ καὶ δὶς οἰμῶξαι, γύναι,
τοιοῦδ’ ἀποβλαφθεῖσαν ἀρτίως φίλου.

ΤΕ. Σοὶ μὲν δοκεῖν ταῦτ’ ἔστ’, ἐμοὶ δ’ ἄγαν φρονεῖν.

ΧΟ. Ξυναυδῶ.

ΤΕ. Οἴμοι, τέκνον, πρὸς οἷα δουλείας ζυγὰ
945 χωροῦμεν, οἷοι νῷν ἐφεστᾶσιν σκοποί.

ΧΟ. Ὤμοι, ἀναλγήτων
δισσῶν ἐθρόησας ἄναυδ’
ἔργ’ Ἀτρειδᾶν τῷδ’ ἄχει.

Ἀλλ’ ἀπείργοι θεός.
ΤΕ. Οὐκ ἂν τάδ’ ἔστη τῇδε, μὴ θεῶν μέτα.

ΧΟ. Ἄγαν ὑπερβριθὲς τ‹όδ’› ἄχθος ἤνυσαν.

ΤΕ. Τοιόνδε μέντοι Ζηνὸς ἡ δεινὴ θεὸς
Παλλὰς φυτεύει πῆμ’ Ὀδυσσέως χάριν.
ΧΟ. Ἦ ῥα κελαινώπαν θυμὸν ἐφυβρίζει
πολύτλας ἀνήρ,
γελᾷ δὲ τοῖσ‹ι› μαινομένοις ἄχεσιν
πολὺν γέλωτα, φεῦ, φεῦ,
ξύν τε διπλοῖ βασιλῆς
κλύοντες Ἀτρεῖδαι.

ΤΕ. Οἱ δ’ οὖν γελώντων κἀπιχαιρόντων κακοῖς
τοῖς τοῦδ’. Ἴσως τοι, κεἰ βλέποντα μὴ ‘πόθουν,
θανόντ’ ἂν οἰμώξειαν ἐν χρείᾳ δορός.
Οἱ γὰρ κακοὶ γνώμαισι τἀγαθὸν χεροῖν
ἔχοντες οὐκ ἴσασι, πρίν τις ἐκβάλῃ.
Ἐμοὶ πικρὸς τέθνηκεν ἢ κείνοις γλυκύς,
αὐτῷ δὲ τερπνός· ὧν γὰρ ἠράσθη τυχεῖν
ἐκτήσαθ’ αὐτῷ, θάνατον ὅνπερ ἤθελεν.
Τί δῆτα τοῦδ’ ἐπεγγελῷεν ἂν κάτα;
Θεοῖς τέθνηκεν οὗτος, οὐ κείνοισιν, οὔ.
Πρὸς ταῦτ’ Ὀδυσσεὺς ἐν κενοῖς ὑβριζέτω·
Αἴας γὰρ αὐτοῖς οὐκέτ’ ἔστιν, ἀλλ’ ἐμοὶ
λιπὼν ἀνίας καὶ γόους διοίχεται.

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

Ἰώ μοί μοι.
975 ΧΟ. Σίγησον. Αὐδὴν γὰρ δοκῶ Τεύκρου κλύειν
βοῶντος ἄτης τῆσδ’ ἐπίσκοπον μέλος.

ΤΕΥ. Ἦ φίλτατ’ Αἴας, ὦ ξύναιμον ὄμμ’ ἐμοί,
ἆρ’ ἠμπόληκας ὥσπερ ἡ φάτις κρατεῖ;

ΧΟ. Ὄλωλεν ἀνήρ, Τεῦκρε, τοῦτ’ ἐπίστασο.
980 ΤΕΥ. Οἴμοι βαρείας ἆρα τῆς ἐμῆς τύχης.

ΧΟ. Ὡς ὦδ’ ἐχόντων -

ΤΕΥ. Ὢ τάλας ἐγώ, τάλας.

ΧΟ. πάρα στενάζειν·

ΤΕΥ. Ἦ περισπερχὲς πάθος.

ΧΟ. Ἄγαν γε, Τεῦκρε.

ΤΕΥ. Φεῦ τάλας. Τί γὰρ τέκνον
τὸ τοῦδε; ποῦ μοι γῆς κυρεῖ τῆς Τρῳάδος;
985 ΧΟ. Μόνος παρὰ σκηναῖσιν -

ΤΕΥ. Οὐχ ὅσον τάχος
δῆτ’ αὐτὸν ἄξεις δεῦρο, μή τις ὡς κενῆς
σκύμνον λεαίνης δυσμενῶν ἀναρπάσῃ;
Ἴθ’, ἐγκόνει, σύγκαμνε· τοῖς θανοῦσί τοι
φιλοῦσι πάντες κειμένοις ἐπεγγελᾶν.
990 ΧΟ. Καὶ μὴν ἔτι ζῶν, Τεῦκρε, τοῦδέ σοι μέλειν
ἐφίεθ’ ἀνὴρ κεῖνος, ὥσπερ οὖν μέλει.

ΤΕΥ. Ὦ τῶν ἁπάντων δὴ θεαμάτων ἐμοὶ
ἄλγιστον ὢν προσεῖδον ὀφθαλμοῖς ἐγώ,
ὁδός θ’ ὁδῶν πασῶν ἀνιάσασα δὴ
995 μάλιστα τοὐμὸν σπλάγχνον, ἣν δὴ νῦν ἔβην,
ὦ φίλτατ’ Αἴας, τὸν σὸν ὡς ἐπῃσθόμην
μόρον διώκων κἀξιχνοσκοπούμενος.
Ὀξεῖα γάρ σου βάξις ὡς θεοῦ τινος
διῆλθ’ Ἀχαιοὺς πάντας ὡς οἴχῃ θανών.
1000 Ἀγὼ κλύων δύστηνος ἐκποδὼν μὲν ὢν
ὑπεστέναζον, νῦν δ’ ὁρῶν ἀπόλλυμαι.
Οἴμοι.
Ἴθ’, ἐκκάλυψον, ὡς ἴδω τὸ πᾶν κακόν.
Ὦ δυσθέατον ὄμμα καὶ τόλμης πικρᾶς,
1005 ὅσας ἀνίας μοι κατασπείρας φθίνεις.
Ποῖ γὰρ μολεῖν μοι δυνατόν, εἰς ποίους βροτούς,
τοῖς σοῖς ἀρήξαντ’ ἐν πόνοισι μηδαμοῦ;
Ἦ πού ‹με› Τελαμών, σὸς πατὴρ ἐμός θ’ ἅμα,
δέξαιτ’ ἂν εὐπρόσωπος ἵλεώς τ’ ἴσως
1010 χωροῦντ’ ἄνευ σοῦ· πῶς γὰρ οὔχ; ὅτῳ πάρα
μηδ’ εὐτυχοῦντι μηδὲν ἥδιον γελᾶν.
Οὗτος τί κρύψει; ποῖον οὐκ ἐρεῖ κακόν,
τὸν ἐκ δορὸς γεγῶτα πολεμίου νόθον,

τὸν δειλίᾳ προδόντα καὶ κακανδρίᾳ
σέ, φίλτατ’ Αἴας, ἢ δόλοισιν, ὡς τὰ σὰ
κράτη θανόντος καὶ δόμους νέμοιμι σούς.
Τοιαῦτ’ ἀνὴρ δύσοργος, ἐν γήρᾳ βαρύς,
ἐρεῖ, πρὸς οὐδὲν εἰς ἔριν θυμούμενος·
τέλος δ’ ἀπωστὸς γῆς ἀπορριφθήσομαι,
δοῦλος λόγοισιν ἀντ’ ἐλευθέρου φανείς.
Τοιαῦτα μὲν κατ’ οἶκον· ἐν Τροίᾳ δέ μοι
πολλοὶ μὲν ἐχθροί, παῦρα δ’ ὠφελήσιμα·
καὶ ταῦτα πάντα σοῦ θανόντος ηὑρόμην.
Οἴμοι, τί δράσω; πῶς σ’ ἀποσπάσω πικροῦ
τοῦδ’ αἰόλου κνώδοντος, ὦ τάλας, ὑφ’ οὗ
φονέως ἄρ’ ἐξέπνευσας; Εἶδες ὡς χρόνῳ
ἔμελλέ σ’ Ἕκτωρ καὶ θανὼν ἀποφθίσειν;
Σκέψασθε, πρὸς θεῶν, τὴν τύχην δυοῖν βροτοῖν·
Ἕκτωρ μέν, ᾧ δὴ τοῦδ’ ἐδωρήθη πάρα,
ζωστῆρι πρισθεὶς ἱππικῶν ἐξ ἀντύγων,
ἐκνάπτετ’ αἰὲν ἔστ’ ἀπέψυξεν βίον·
οὗτος δ’ ἐκείνου τήνδε δωρεὰν ἔχων
πρὸς τοῦδ’ ὅλωλε θανασίμῳ πεσήματι.
Ἆρ’ οὐκ Ἐρινὺς τοῦτ’ ἐχάλκευσεν ξίφος,
κἀκεῖνον Ἅιδης, δημιουργὸς ἄγριος;
Ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν καὶ ταῦτα καὶ τὰ πάντ’ ἀεὶ
φάσκοιμ’ ἂν ἀνθρώποισι μηχανᾶν θεούς·
ὅτῳ δὲ μὴ τάδ’ ἐστὶν ἐν γνώμῃ φίλα,
κεῖνός τ’ ἐκεῖνα στεργέτω κἀγὼ τάδε.
ΧΟ. Μὴ τεῖνε μακράν, ἀλλ’ ὅπως κρύψεις τάφῳ
φράζου τὸν ἄνδρα χὤ τι μυθήσῃ τάχα.
Βλέπω γὰρ ἐχθρὸν φῶτα, καὶ τάχ’ ἂν κακοῖς
γελῶν ἃ δὴ κακοῦργος ἐξίκοιτ’ ἀνήρ.

ΤΕΥ. Τίς δ’ ἐστὶν ὅντιν’ ἄνδρα προσλεύσσεις στρατοῦ;
ΧΟ. Μενέλαος, ᾧ δὴ τόνδε πλοῦν ἐστείλαμεν.

ΤΕΥ. Ὁρῶ· μαθεῖν γὰρ ἐγγὺς ὢν οὐ δυσπετής.

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ
Οὗτος, σὲ φωνῶ, τόνδε τὸν νεκρὸν χεροῖν
μὴ συγκομίζειν, ἀλλ’ ἐᾶν ὅπως ἔχει.

ΤΕΥ. Τίνος χάριν τοσόνδ’ ἀνήλωσας λόγον;
1050 ΜΕ. Δοκοῦντ’ ἐμοί, δοκοῦντα δ’ ὃς κραίνει στρατοῦ.

ΤΕΥ. Οὔκουν ἂν εἴποις ἥντιν’ αἰτίαν προθείς;

ΜΕ. Ὅθούνεκ’ αὐτὸν ἐλπίσαντες οἴκοθεν
ἄγειν Ἀχαιοῖς ξύμμαχόν τε καὶ φίλον,
ἐξηύρομεν ζητοῦντες ἐχθίω Φρυγῶν·
1055 ὅστις στρατῷ ξύμπαντι βουλεύσας φόνον
νύκτωρ ἐπεστράτευσεν, ὡς ἔλοι δορί·
κεἰ μὴ θεῶν τις τήνδε πεῖραν ἔσβεσεν,
ἡμεῖς μὲν ἂν τήνδ’ ἣν ὅδ’ εἵληχεν τύχην
θανόντες ἂν προὐκείμεθ’ αἰσχίστῳ μόρῳ,
1060 οὗτος δ’ ἂν ἔζη. Νῦν δ’ ἐνήλαξεν θεὸς
τὴν τοῦδ’ ὕβριν πρὸς μῆλα καὶ ποίμνας πεσεῖν.
Ὧν οὕνεκ’ αὐτὸν οὔτις ἔστ’ ἀνὴρ σθένων
τοσοῦτον ὥστε σῶμα τυμβεῦσαι τάφῳ,
ἀλλ’ ἀμφὶ χλωρὰν ψάμαθον ἐκβεβλημένος
1065 ὄρνισι φορβὴ παραλίοις γενήσεται.
Πρὸς ταῦτα μηδὲν δεινὸν ἐξάρῃς μένος·
εἰ γὰρ βλέποντος μὴ ‘δυνήθημεν κρατεῖν,
πάντως θανόντος γ’ ἄρξομεν, κἂν μὴ θέλῃς,
χερσὶν παρευθύνοντες· οὐ γὰρ ἔσθ’ ὅπου

λόγων ἀκοῦσαι ζῶν ποτ’ ἠθέλησ’ ἐμῶν.
Καίτοι κακοῦ πρὸς ἀνδρὸς ἄνδρα δημότην
μηδὲν δικαιοῦν τῶν ἐφεστώτων κλύειν.
Οὐ γάρ ποτ’ οὔτ’ ἂν ἐν πόλει νόμοι καλῶς
φέροιντ’ ἄν, ἔνθα μὴ καθεστήκῃ δέος,
οὔτ’ ἂν στρατός γε σωφρόνως ἄρχοιτ’ ἔτι
μηδὲν φόβου πρόβλημα μηδ’ αἰδοῦς ἔχων.
Ἀλλ’ ἄνδρα χρή, κἂν σῶμα γεννήσῃ μέγα,
δοκεῖν πεσεῖν ἂν κἂν ἀπὸ σμικροῦ κακοῦ.
Δέος γὰρ ᾧ πρόσεστιν αἰσχύνη θ’ ὁμοῦ,
σωτηρίαν ἔχοντα τόνδ’ ἐπίστασο·
ὅπου δ’ ὑβρίζειν δρᾶν θ’ ἃ βούλεται παρῇ,
ταύτην νόμιζε τὴν πόλιν χρόνῳ ποτὲ
ἐξ οὐρίων δραμοῦσαν εἰς βυθὸν πεσεῖν.
Ἀλλ’ ἐστάτω μοι καὶ δέος τι καίριον,
καὶ μὴ δοκῶμεν δρῶντες ἂν ἡδώμεθα
οὐκ ἀντιτίσειν αὖθις ἂν λυπώμεθα.
Ἔρπει παραλλὰξ ταῦτα. Πρόσθεν οὗτος ἦν
αἴθων ὑβριστής, νῦν δ’ ἐγὼ μέγ’ αὖ φρονῶ.
Καί σοι προφωνῶ τόνδε μὴ θάπτειν, ὅπως
μὴ τόνδε θάπτων αὐτὸς εἰς ταφὰς πέσῃς.

ΧΟ. Μενέλαε, μὴ γνώμας ὑποστήσας σοφὰς
εἶτ’ αὐτὸς ἐν θανοῦσιν ὑβριστὴς γένῃ.

ΤΕΥ. Οὐκ ἄν ποτ’, ἄνδρες, ἄνδρα θαυμάσαιμ’ ἔτι,
ὃς μηδὲν ὢν γοναῖσιν εἶθ’ ἁμαρτάνει,
ὅθ’ οἱ δοκοῦντες εὐγενεῖς πεφυκέναι
τοιαῦθ’ ἁμαρτάνουσιν ἐν λόγοις ἔπη.
Ἄγ’, εἶπ’ ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς αὖθις, ἦ σὺ φῂς ἄγειν
τὸν ἄνδρ’ Ἀχαιοῖς δεῦρο σύμμαχον λαβών;
οὐκ αὐτὸς ἐξέπλευσεν ὡς αὐτοῦ κρατῶν;
ποῦ σὺ στρατηγεῖς τοῦδε; ποῦ δὲ σοὶ λεῶν
ἔξεστ’ ἀνάσσειν ὧν ὅδ’ ἦγετ’ οἴκοθεν;

Σπάρτης ἀνάσσων ἦλθες, οὐχ ἡμῶν κρατῶν,
οὐδ’ ἔσθ’ ὅπου σοὶ τόνδε κοσμῆσαι πλέον
ἀρχῆς ἔκειτο θεσμὸς ἢ καὶ τῷδε σέ.
1105 Ὕπαρχος ἄλλων δεῦρ’ ἔπλευσας, οὐχ ὅλων
στρατηγός, ὥστ’ Αἴαντος ἡγεῖσθαί ποτε.
Ἀλλ’ ὥνπερ ἄρχεις ἄρχε, καὶ τὰ σέμν’ ἔπη
κόλαζ’ ἐκείνους· τόνδε δ’, εἴτε μὴ σὺ φῂς
εἴθ’ ἄτερος στρατηγός, εἰς ταφὰς ἐγὼ
1110 θήσω δικαίως οὐ τὸ σὸν δείσας στόμα.
Οὐ γάρ τι τῆς σῆς οὕνεκ’ ἐστρατεύσατο
γυναικός, ὥσπερ οἱ πόνου πολλοῦ πλέῳ,
ἀλλ’ οὕνεχ’ ὅρκων οἷσιν ἦν ἐπώμοτος,
σοῦ δ’ οὐδέν· οὐ γὰρ ἠξίου τοὺς μηδένας.
1115 Πρὸς ταῦτα πλείους δεῦρο κήρυκας λαβὼν
καὶ τὸν στρατηγὸν ἧκε· τοῦ δὲ σοῦ ψόφου
οὐκ ἂν στραφείην, ἕως ἂν ᾖς οἷός περ εἶ.

ΧΟ. Οὐδ’ αὖ τοιαύτην γλῶσσαν ἐν κακοῖς φιλῶ·
τὰ σκληρὰ γάρ τοι, κἂν ὑπέρδικ’ ᾖ, δάκνει.
1120 ΜΕ. Ὁ τοξότης ἔοικεν οὐ σμικρὸν φρονεῖν.

ΤΕΥ. Οὐ γὰρ βάναυσον τὴν τέχνην ἐκτησάμην.

ΜΕ. Μέγ’ ἄν τι κομπάσειας, ἀσπίδ’ εἰ λάβοις.

ΤΕΥ. Κἂν ψιλὸς ἀρκέσαιμι σοί γ’ ὡπλισμένῳ.

ΜΕ. Ἡ γλῶσσά σου τὸν θυμὸν ὡς δεινὸν τρέφει.
ΤΕΥ. Ξὺν τῷ δικαίῳ γὰρ μέγ’ ἔξεστιν φρονεῖν.

ΜΕ. Δίκαια γὰρ τόνδ’ εὐτυχεῖν κτείναντά με;

ΤΕΥ. Κτείναντα; δεινόν γ’ εἶπας, εἰ καὶ ζῇς θανών.

ΜΕ. Θεὸς γὰρ ἐκσῴζει με, τῷδε δ’ οἴχομαι.

ΤΕΥ. Μὴ νῦν ἀτίμα θεούς, θεοῖς σεσωσμένος.
ΜΕ. Ἐγὼ γὰρ ἂν ψέξαιμι δαιμόνων νόμους;

ΤΕΥ. Εἰ τοὺς θανόντας οὐκ ἐᾷς θάπτειν παρών.

ΜΕ. Τούς γ’ αὐτὸς αὐτοῦ πολεμίους· οὐ γὰρ καλόν.

ΤΕΥ. Ἦ σοὶ γὰρ Αἴας πολέμιος προὔστη ποτέ;

ΜΕ. Μισοῦντ’ ἐμίσει, καὶ σὺ τοῦτ’ ἠπίστασο.
ΤΕΥ. Κλέπτης γὰρ αὐτοῦ ψηφοποιὸς ηὑρέθης.

ΜΕ. Ἐν τοῖς δικασταῖς, κοὐκ ἐμοί, τόδ’ ἐσφάλη.

ΤΕΥ. Πόλλ’ ἂν καλῶς λάθρᾳ σὺ κλέψειας κακά.

ΜΕ. Τοῦτ’ εἰς ἀνίαν τοὔπος ἔρχεταί τινι.

ΤΕΥ. Οὐ μᾶλλον, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἢ λυπήσομεν.
1140 ΜΕ. Ἔν σοι φράσω· τόνδ’ ἐστὶν οὐχὶ θαπτέον.

ΤΕΥ. Ἀλλ’ ἀντακούσῃ τοῦτον ὡς τεθάψεται.

ΜΕ. Ἤδη ποτ’ εἶδον ἄνδρ’ ἐγὼ γλώσσῃ θρασὺν
ναύτας ἐφορμήσαντα χειμῶνος τὸ πλεῖν,
ᾧ φθέγμ’ ἂν οὐκ ἀνηῦρες, ἡνίκ’ ἐν κακῷ
1145 χειμῶνος εἶχετ’, ἀλλ’ ὑφ’ εἵματος κρυφεὶς
πατεῖν παρεῖχε τῷ θέλοντι ναυτίλων.
Οὕτω δὲ καὶ σὲ καὶ τὸ σὸν λάβρον στόμα
σμικροῦ νέφους τάχ’ ἄν τις ἐκπνεύσας μέγας
χειμὼν κατασβέσειε τὴν πολλὴν βοήν.
1150 ΤΕΥ. Ἐγὼ δέ γ’ ἄνδρ’ ὄπωπα μωρίας πλέων,
ὃς ἐν κακοῖς ὕβριζε τοῖσι τῶν πέλας.
Κᾆτ’ αὐτὸν εἰσιδών τις ἐμφερὴς ἐμοὶ
ὀργήν θ’ ὅμοιος εἶπε τοιοῦτον λόγον·
“Ὦνθρωπε, μὴ δρᾶ τοὺς τεθνηκότας κακῶς·

εἰ γὰρ ποιήσεις, ἴσθι πημανούμενος”.
Τοιαῦτ’ ἄνολβον ἄνδρ’ ἐνουθέτει παρών.
Ὁρῶ δέ τοί νιν, κἄστιν, ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ,
οὐδείς ποτ’ ἄλλος ἢ σύ. Μῶν ᾐνιξάμην;

ΜΕ. Ἄπειμι· καὶ γὰρ αἰσχρόν, εἰ πύθοιτό τις,
λόγοις κολάζειν ᾧ βιάζεσθαι παρῇ.

ΤΕΥ. Ἄφερπέ νυν· κἀμοὶ γὰρ αἴσχιστον κλύειν
ἀνδρὸς ματαίου φλαῦρ’ ἔπη μυθουμένου.

ΧΟ. Ἔσται μεγάλης ἔριδός τις ἀγών.
Ἀλλ’ ὡς δύνασαι, Τεῦκρε, ταχύνας
σπεῦσον κοίλην κάπετόν τιν’ ἰδεῖν
τῷδ’, ἔνθα βροτοῖς τὸν ἀείμνηστον
τάφον εὑρώεντα καθέξει.

ΤΕΥ. Καὶ μὴν ἐς αὐτὸν καιρὸν οἵδε πλησίοι
πάρεισιν ἀνδρὸς τοῦδε παῖς τε καὶ γυνή,
τάφον περιστελοῦντε δυστήνου νεκροῦ.
Ὦ παῖ, πρόσελθε δεῦρο, καὶ σταθεὶς πέλας
ἱκέτης ἔφαψαι πατρὸς ὅς σ’ ἐγείνατο.
Θάκει δὲ προστρόπαιος ἐν χεροῖν ἔχων
κόμας ἐμὰς καὶ τῆσδε καὶ σαυτοῦ τρίτου,
ἱκτήριον θησαυρόν. Εἰ δέ τις στρατοῦ
βίᾳ σ’ ἀποσπάσειε τοῦδε τοῦ νεκροῦ,
κακὸς κακῶς ἄθαπτος ἐκπέσοι χθονός,
γένους ἅπαντος ῥίζαν ἐξημημένος,
αὕτως ὅπωσπερ τόνδ’ ἐγὼ τέμνω πλόκον.

Ἔχ’ αὐτόν, ὦ παῖ, καὶ φύλασσε, μηδέ σε
κινησάτω τις, ἀλλὰ προσπεσὼν ἔχου.
Ὑμεῖς τε μὴ γυναῖκες ἀντ’ ἀνδρῶν πέλας
παρέστατ’, ἀλλ’ ἀρήγετ’ ἔστ’ ἐγὼ μόλω
τάφου μεληθεὶς τῷδε, κἂν μηδεὶς ἐᾷ.
ΧΟ. Τίς ἄρα νέατος ἐς πότε λή-Str. 1 .
ξει πολυπλάγκτων ἐτέων ἀριθμός,
τὰν ἄπαυστον αἰὲν ἐμοὶ
δορυσσοήτων μόχθων ἅταν ἐπάγων
ἀν τὰν εὐρώδη Τροΐαν,
δύστανον ὄνειδος Ἑλλάνων;
Ὄφελε πρότερον αἰθέρα δῦ-Ant. 1 .
ναι μέγαν ἢ τὸν πολύκοινον Ἅιδαν
κεῖνος ἀνὴρ, ὃς στυγερῶν
ἔδειξεν ὅπλων Ἕλλασιν κοινὸν Ἄρη.
Ὦ πόνοι πρόγονοι πόνων·
κεῖνος γὰρ ἔπερσεν ἀνθρώπους.
Ἐκεῖνος οὐ στεφάνων οὔτε βαθειᾶν Str. 2 .
κυλίκων νεῖμεν ἐμοὶ τέρψιν ὁμιλεῖν
οὔτε γλυκὺν αὐλῶν ὅτοβον, δύσμορος,
οὔτ’ ἐννυχίαν τέρψιν ἰαύειν·
ἐρώτων δ’ ἐρώτων ἀνέπαυσεν ὤ-
μοι. Κεῖμαι δ’ ἀμέριμνος οὕ-
τως, ἀεὶ πυκιναῖς δρόσοις
τεγγόμενος κόμας,
λυγρᾶς μνήματα Τροίας.
Καὶ πρὶν μὲν ἐννυχίου δείματος ἦν μοι Ant. 2 .
προβολὰ καὶ βελέων θούριος Αἴας·
νῦν δ’ οὗτος ἀνεῖται στυγερῷ δαίμονι.
Τίς μοι, τίς ἔτ’ οὖν τέρψις ἐπέσται;
Γενοίμαν ἵν’ ὑλᾶεν ἔπεστι πόν-
του πρόβλημ’ ἁλίκλυστον, ἄ-
κραν ὑπὸ πλάκα Σουνίου,
τὰς ἱερὰς ὅπως
προσείποιμεν Ἀθάνας.

ΤΕΥ. Καὶ μὴν ἰδὼν ἔσπευσα τὸν στρατηλάτην
Ἀγαμέμνον’ ἡμῖν δεῦρο τόνδ’ ὁρμώμενον·
1225 δῆλος δέ μοὐστὶ σκαιὸν ἐκλύσων στόμα.

ΑΓΑΜΕΜΝΩΝ
Σὲ δὴ τὰ δεινὰ ῥήματ’ ἀγγέλλουσί μοι
τλῆναι καθ’ ἡμῶν ὧδ’ ἀνοιμωκτεὶ χανεῖν·
σέ τοι, τὸν ἐκ τῆς αἰχμαλωτίδος λέγω.
Ἢ που τραφεὶς ἂν μητρὸς εὐγενοῦς ἄπο
1230 ὑψήλ’ ἐκόμπεις κἀπ’ ἄκρων ὠδοιπόρεις,
ὅτ’ οὐδὲν ὢν τοῦ μηδὲν ἀντέστης ὕπερ,
κοὔτε στρατηγοὺς οὔτε ναυάρχους μολεῖν
ἡμᾶς Ἀχαιῶν οὔτε σοῦ διωμόσω,
ἀλλ’ αὐτὸς ἄρχων, ὡς σὺ φῄς, Αἴας ἔπλει.
1235 Ταῦτ’ οὐκ ἀκούειν μεγάλα πρὸς δούλων κακά;
Ποίου κέκραγας ἀνδρὸς ὧδ’ ὑπέρφρονα;
ποῖ βάντος ἢ ποῦ στάντος οὗπερ οὐκ ἐγώ;
Οὐκ ἆρ’ Ἀχαιοῖς ἄνδρες εἰσὶ πλὴν ὅδε;
Πικροὺς ἔοιγμεν τῶν Ἀχιλλείων ὅπλων
1240 ἀγῶνας Ἀργείοισι κηρῦξαι τότε,
εἰ πανταχοῦ φανούμεθ’ ἐκ Τεύκρου κακοί,
κοὐκ ἀρκέσει ποθ’ ὑμὶν οὐδ’ ἠσσημένοις
εἴκειν ἃ τοῖς πολλοῖσιν ἤρεσκεν κριταῖς,
ἀλλ’ αἰὲν ἡμᾶς ἢ κακοῖς βαλεῖτέ που
1245 ἢ σὺν δόλῳ κεντήσεθ’ οἱ λελειμμένοι.
Ἐκ τῶνδε μέντοι τῶν τρόπων οὐκ ἄν ποτε
κατάστασις γένοιτ’ ἂν οὐδενὸς νόμου,
εἰ τοὺς δίκῃ νικῶντας ἐξωθήσομεν
καὶ τοὺς ὄπισθεν εἰς τὸ πρόσθεν ἄξομεν.
1250 Ἀλλ’ εἰρκτέον τάδ’ ἐστίν· οὐ γὰρ οἱ πλατεῖς
οὐδ’ εὐρύνωτοι φῶτες ἀσφαλέστατοι,
ἀλλ’ οἱ φρονοῦντες εὖ κρατοῦσι πανταχοῦ.
Μέγας δὲ πλευρὰ βοῦς ὑπὸ σμικρᾶς ὅμως
μάστιγος ὀρθὸς εἰς ὁδὸν πορεύεται.
1255 Καὶ σοὶ προσέρπον τοῦτ’ ἐγὼ τὸ φάρμακον
ὁρῶ τάχ’, εἰ μὴ νοῦν κατακτήσῃ τινά·

ὃς ἀνδρὸς οὐκέτ᾽ ὄντος, ἀλλ᾽ ἤδη σκιᾶς,
θαρσῶν ὑβρίζεις κἀξελευθεροστομεῖς.
Οὐ σωφρονήσεις; οὐ μαθὼν ὃς εἶ φύσιν
ἄλλον τιν᾽ ἄξεις ἄνδρα δεῦρ᾽ ἐλεύθερον,
ὅστις πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἀντὶ σοῦ λέξει τὰ σά;
Σοῦ γὰρ λέγοντος οὐκέτ᾽ ἂν μάθοιμ᾽ ἐγώ·
τὴν βάρβαρον γὰρ γλῶσσαν οὐκ ἐπαΐω.

ΧΟ. Εἴθ᾽ ὑμὶν ἀμφοῖν νοῦς γένοιτο σωφρονεῖν·
τούτου γὰρ οὐδὲν σφῷν ἔχω λῷον φράσαι.

ΤΕΥ. Φεῦ· τοῦ θανόντος ὡς ταχεῖά τις βροτοῖς
χάρις διαρρεῖ καὶ προδοῦσ᾽ ἀλίσκεται,
εἰ σοῦ γ᾽ ὅδ᾽ ἀνὴρ οὐδ᾽ ἐπὶ σμικρῶν λόγων,
Αἴας, ἔτ᾽ ἴσχει μνῆστιν, οὗ σὺ πολλάκις
τὴν σὴν προτείνων προὔκαμες ψυχὴν δορί·
ἀλλ᾽ οἴχεται δὴ πάντα ταῦτ᾽ ἐρριμμένα.
Ὦ πολλὰ λέξας ἄρτι κἀνόητ᾽ ἔπη,
οὐ μνημονεύεις οὐκέτ᾽ οὐδέν, ἡνίκα
ἑρκέων ποθ᾽ ὑμᾶς οὗτος ἐγκεκλῃμένους,
ἤδη τὸ μηδὲν ὄντας, ἐν τροπῇ δορὸς
ἐρρύσατ᾽ ἐλθὼν μοῦνος, ἀμφὶ μὲν νεῶν
ἄκροισιν ἤδη ναυτικοῖς ἑδωλίοις
πυρὸς φλέγοντος, εἰς δὲ ναυτικὰ σκάφη
πηδῶντος ἄρδην Ἕκτορος τάφρων ὕπερ;
Τίς ταῦτ᾽ ἀπεῖρξεν; οὐχ ὅδ᾽ ἦν ὁ δρῶν τάδε,
ὃν οὐδαμοῦ φῂς οὗ σὺ μή, βῆναι ποδί;
Ἆρ᾽ ὑμὶν οὗτος ταῦτ᾽ ἔδρασεν ἔνδικα;
χὥτ᾽ αὖθις αὐτὸς Ἕκτορος μόνος μόνου,
λαχών τε κἀκέλευστος, ἦλθ᾽ ἐναντίος,
οὐ δραπέτην τὸν κλῆρον ἐς μέσον καθεὶς
ὑγρᾶς ἀρούρας βῶλον, ἀλλ᾽ ὃς εὐλόφου
κυνῆς ἔμελλε πρῶτος ἅλμα κουφιεῖν;
Ὅδ᾽ ἦν ὁ πράσσων ταῦτα, σὺν δ᾽ ἐγὼ παρὼν

ὁ δοῦλος, οὐκ τῆς βαρβάρου μητρὸς γεγώς.
Δύστηνε, ποῖ βλέπων ποτ’ αὐτὰ καὶ θροεῖς;
Οὐκ οἶσθα σοῦ πατρὸς μὲν ὃς προὔφυ πατὴρ
ἀρχαῖον ὄντα Πέλοπα βάρβαρον Φρύγα;
Ἀτρέα δ’, ὃς αὖ σ’ ἔσπειρε, δυσσεβέστατον
προθέντ’ ἀδελφῷ δεῖπνον οἰκείων τέκνων;
Αὐτὸς δὲ μητρὸς ἐξέφυς Κρήσσης, ἐφ’ ᾗ
λαβὼν ἐπακτὸν ἄνδρ’ ὁ φιτύσας πατὴρ
ἐφῆκεν ἐλλοῖς ἰχθύσιν διαφθοράν.
Τοιοῦτος ὢν τοιῷδ’ ὀνειδίζεις σποράν;
ὃς ἐκ πατρὸς μέν εἰμι Τελαμῶνος γεγώς,
ὅστις στρατοῦ τὰ πρῶτ’ ἀριστεύσας ἐμὴν
ἴσχει ξύνευνον μητέρ’, ἣ φύσει μὲν ἦν
βασίλεια, Λαομέδοντος, ἔκκριτον δέ νιν
δώρημα κείνῳ ‘δωκεν Ἀλκμήνης γόνος.
Ἆρ’ ὧδ’ ἄριστος ἐξ ἀριστέοιν δυοῖν
βλαστὼν ἂν αἰσχύνοιμι τοὺς πρὸς αἵματος,
οὓς νῦν σὺ τοιοῖσδ’ ἐν πόνοισι κειμένους
ὠθεῖς ἀθάπτους, οὐδ’ ἐπαισχύνῃ λέγων;
Εὖ νυν τόδ’ ἴσθι, τοῦτον εἰ βαλεῖτέ που,
βαλεῖτε χἠμᾶς τρεῖς ὁμοῦ συγκειμένους·
ἐπεὶ καλόν μοι τοῦδ’ ὑπερπονουμένῳ
θανεῖν προδήλως μᾶλλον ἢ τῆς σῆς ὑπὲρ
γυναικός, ἢ τοῦ σοῦ ξυναίμονος λέγω.
Πρὸς ταῦθ’ ὅρα μὴ τοὐμόν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ σόν·
ὡς εἴ με πημανεῖς τι, βουλήσῃ ποτὲ
καὶ δειλὸς εἶναι μᾶλλον ἢ ‘ν ἐμοὶ θρασύς.

ΧΟ. Ἄναξ Ὀδυσσεῦ, καιρὸν ἴσθ’ ἐληλυθώς,
εἰ μὴ ξυνάψων, ἀλλὰ συλλύσων πάρει.

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ
Τί δ’ ἔστιν, ἄνδρες; τηλόθεν γὰρ ᾐσθόμην
βοὴν Ἀτρειδῶν τῷδ’ ἐπ’ ἀλκίμῳ νεκρῷ.

ΑΓ. Οὐ γὰρ κλύοντές ἐσμεν αἰσχίστους λόγους,
ἄναξ Ὀδυσσεῦ, τοῦδ’ ὑπ’ ἀνδρὸς ἀρτίως;

ΟΔ. Ποίους; ἐγὼ γὰρ ἀνδρὶ συγγνώμην ἔχω
κλύοντι φλαῦρα συμβαλεῖν ἔπη κακά.

ΑΓ. Ἤκουσεν αἰσχρά· δρῶν γὰρ ἦν τοιαῦτά με.
ΟΔ. Τί γάρ σ’ ἔδρασεν, ὥστε καὶ βλάβην ἔχειν;

ΑΓ. Οὔ φησ’ ἐάσειν τόνδε τὸν νεκρὸν ταφῆς
ἄμοιρον, ἀλλὰ πρὸς βίαν θάψειν ἐμοῦ.

ΟΔ. Ἔξεστιν οὖν εἰπόντι τἀληθῆ φίλῳ
σοὶ μηδὲν ἧσσον ἢ πάρος ξυνηρετεῖν;
ΑΓ. Εἶπ’· ἦ γὰρ εἶην οὐκ ἂν εὖ φρονῶν, ἐπεὶ
φίλον σ’ ἐγὼ μέγιστον Ἀργείων νέμω.

ΟΔ. Ἄκουέ νυν. Τὸν ἄνδρα τόνδε πρὸς θεῶν
μὴ τλῇς ἄθαπτον ὧδ’ ἀναλγήτως βαλεῖν·
μηδ’ ἡ βία σε μηδαμῶς νικησάτω
τοσόνδε μισεῖν ὥστε τὴν δίκην πατεῖν.
Κἀμοὶ γὰρ ἦν ποθ’ οὗτος ἔχθιστος στρατοῦ,
ἐξ οὗ ‘κράτησα τῶν Ἀχιλλείων ὅπλων·
ἀλλ’ αὐτὸν ἔμπας ὄντ’ ἐγὼ τοιόνδ’ ἐμοὶ
οὐκ ἀντατιμάσαιμ’ ἄν, ὥστε μὴ λέγειν
ἔν’ ἄνδρ’ ἰδεῖν ἄριστον Ἀργείων, ὅσοι
Τροίαν ἀφικόμεσθα, πλὴν Ἀχιλλέως.

Ὥστ’ οὐκ ἂν ἐνδίκως γ’ ἀτιμάζοιτό σοι·
οὐ γάρ τι τοῦτον, ἀλλὰ τοὺς θεῶν νόμους
φθείροις ἄν. Ἄνδρα δ’ οὐ δίκαιον, εἰ θάνοι,
1345 βλάπτειν τὸν ἐσθλόν, οὐδ’ ἐὰν μισῶν κυρῇς.

ΑΓ. Σὺ ταῦτ’, Ὀδυσσεῦ, τοῦδ’ ὑπερμαχεῖς ἐμοί;

ΟΔ. Ἔγωγ’· ἐμίσουν δ’, ἡνίκ’ ἦν μισεῖν καλόν.

ΑΓ. Οὐ γὰρ θανόντι καὶ προσεμβῆναί σε χρή;

ΟΔ. Μὴ χαῖρ’, Ἀτρείδη, κέρδεσιν τοῖς μὴ καλοῖς.
1350 ΑΓ. Τόν τοι τύραννον εὐσεβεῖν οὐ ῥᾴδιον.

ΟΔ. Ἀλλ’ εὖ λέγουσι τοῖς φίλοις τιμὰς νέμειν.

ΑΓ. Κλύειν τὸν ἐσθλὸν ἄνδρα χρὴ τῶν ἐν τέλει.

ΟΔ. Παῦσαι· κρατεῖς τοι τῶν φίλων νικώμενος.

ΑΓ. Μέμνησ’ ὁποίῳ φωτὶ τὴν χάριν δίδως.
ΟΔ. Ὅδ’ ἐχθρὸς ἀνήρ, ἀλλὰ γενναῖός ποτ’ ἦν.

ΑΓ. Τί ποτε ποήσεις; ἐχθρὸν ὦδ’ αἰδῇ νέκυν;

ΟΔ. Νικᾷ γὰρ ἀρετή με τῆς ἔχθρας πολύ.

ΑΓ. Τοιοίδε μέντοι φῶτες ἔμπληκτοι βροτῶν.

ΟΔ. Ἦ κάρτα πολλοὶ νῦν φίλοι καὖθις πικροί.
ΑΓ. Τοιούσδ’ ἐπαινεῖς δῆτα σὺ κτᾶσθαι φίλους;

ΟΔ. Σκληρὰν ἐπαινεῖν οὐ φιλῶ ψυχὴν ἐγώ.

ΑΓ. Ἡμᾶς σὺ δειλοὺς τῇδε θἡμέρᾳ φανεῖς;

ΟΔ. Ἄνδρας μὲν οὖν Ἕλλησι πᾶσιν ἐνδίκους.

ΑΓ. Ἄνωγας οὖν με τὸν νεκρὸν θάπτειν ἐᾶν;
ΟΔ. Ἔγωγε· καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸς ἐνθάδ’ ἵξομαι.

ΑΓ. Ἦ πάνθ’ ὅμοια· πᾶς ἀνὴρ αὐτῷ πονεῖ.

ΟΔ. Τῷ γάρ με μᾶλλον εἰκὸς ἢ ‘μαυτῷ πονεῖν;

ΑΓ. Σὸν ἆρα τοὔργον, οὐκ ἐμὸν κεκλήσεται.

ΟΔ. Ὡς ἂν ποήσῃς, πανταχῇ χρηστός γ’ ἔσῃ.
1370 ΑΓ. Ἀλλ’ εὖ γε μέντοι τοῦτ’ ἐπίστασ’, ὡς ἐγὼ
σοὶ μὲν νέμοιμ’ ἂν τῆσδε καὶ μείζω χάριν,
οὗτος δὲ κἀκεῖ κἀνθάδ’ ὢν ἔμοιγ’ ὁμῶς
ἔχθιστος ἔσται. Σοὶ δὲ δρᾶν ἔξεσθ’ ἃ χρή.

ΧΟ. Ὅστις σ’, Ὀδυσσεῦ, μὴ λέγει γνώμῃ σοφὸν
1375 φῦναι τοιοῦτον ὄντα, μῶρός ἐστ’ ἀνήρ.

ΟΔ. Καὶ νῦν γε Τεύκρῳ τἀπὸ τοῦδ’ ἀγγέλλομαι,
ὅσον τότ’ ἐχθρὸς ἦ, τοσόνδ’ εἶναι φίλος·
καὶ τὸν θανόντα τόνδε συνθάπτειν θέλω
καὶ ξυμπονεῖν καὶ μηδὲν ἐλλείπειν ὅσων
1380 χρὴ τοῖς ἀρίστοις ἀνδράσιν πονεῖν βροτούς.

ΤΕΥ. Ἄριστ’ Ὀδυσσεῦ, πάντ’ ἔχω σ’ ἐπαινέσαι

λόγοισι, καί μ’ ἔψευσας ἐλπίδος πολύ.
Τούτῳ γὰρ ὢν ἔχθιστος Ἀργείων ἀνὴρ
μόνος παρέστης χερσίν, οὐδ’ ἔτλης παρὼν
1385 θανόντι τῷδε ζῶν ἐφυβρίσαι μέγα,
ὡς ὁ στρατηγὸς οὐπιβρόντητος μολὼν
αὐτός τε χὠ ξύναιμος ἠθελησάτην
λωβητὸν αὐτὸν ἐκβαλεῖν ταφῆς ἄτερ.
Τοιγάρ σφ’ Ὀλύμπου τοῦδ’ ὁ πρεσβεύων πατὴρ
1390 μνήμων τ’ Ἐρινὺς καὶ τελεσφόρος Δίκη
κακοὺς κακῶς φθείρειαν, ὥσπερ ἤθελον
τὸν ἄνδρα λώβαις ἐκβαλεῖν ἀναξίως.
Σὲ δ’, ὦ γεραιοῦ σπέρμα Λαέρτου πατρός,
τάφου μὲν ὀκνῶ τοῦδ’ ἐπιψαύειν ἐᾶν,
1395 μὴ τῷ θανόντι τοῦτο δυσχερὲς ποῶ·
τὰ δ’ ἄλλα καὶ ξύμπρασσε, κεἴ τινα στρατοῦ
θέλεις κομίζειν, οὐδὲν ἄλγος ἕξομεν.
Ἐγὼ δὲ τἀμὰ πάντα πορσυνῶ· σὺ δὲ
ἀνὴρ καθ’ ἡμᾶς ἐσθλὸς ὢν ἐπίστασο.
1400 ΟΔ. Ἀλλ’ ἤθελον μέν· εἰ δὲ μή ‘στί σοι φίλον
πράσσειν τάδ’ ἡμᾶς, εἶμ’, ἐπαινέσας τὸ σόν.

ΤΕΥ. Ἅλις· ἤδη γὰρ πολὺς ἐκτέταται
χρόνος. Ἀλλ’ οἱ μὲν κοίλην κάπετον
χερσὶ ταχύνετε, τοὶ δ’ ὑψίβατον
1405 τρίποδ’ ἀμφίπυρον λουτρῶν ὁσίων
θέσθ’ ἐπίκαιρον· μία δ’ ἐκ κλισίας
ἀνδρῶν ἴλη τὸν ὑπασπίδιον
κόσμον φερέτω.
Παῖ, σὺ δὲ πατρός γ’, ὅσον ἰσχύεις,
1410 φιλότητι θιγὼν πλευρὰς σὺν ἐμοὶ
τάσδ’ ἐπικούφιζ’· ἔτι γὰρ θερμαὶ
σύριγγες ἄνω φυσῶσι μέλαν
μένος. Ἀλλ’ ἄγε πᾶς φίλος ὅστις ἀνὴρ
φησὶ παρεῖναι, σούσθω, βάτω,
1415 τῷδ’ ἀνδρὶ πονῶν τῷ πάντ’ ἀγαθῷ
κοὐδενὶ ‹δή› πω λῴονι θνητῶν·

Αἴαντος, ὅτ’ ἦν τόδε φωνῶ.

ΧΟ. Ἦ πολλὰ βροτοῖς ἔστιν ἰδοῦσιν
γνῶναι· πρὶν ἰδεῖν δ’ οὐδεὶς μάντις
1420 τῶν μελλόντων ὅ τι πράξει.

Αντιγόνη - ANTIGONE

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ
Ὦ κοινὸν αὐτάδελφον Ἰσμήνης κάρα,
ἆρ’ οἶσθ’ ὅ τι Ζεὺς τῶν ἀπ’ Οἰδίπου κακῶν
ὁποῖον οὐχὶ νῷν ἔτι ζώσαιν τελεῖ;
Οὐδὲν γὰρ οὔτ’ ἀλγεινὸν οὔτ’ ἄτης ἄτερ
οὔτ’ αἰσχρὸν οὔτ’ ἄτιμόν ἐσθ’ ὁποῖον οὐ
τῶν σῶν τε κἀμῶν οὐκ ὄπωπ’ ἐγὼ κακῶν.
Καὶ νῦν τί τοῦτ’ αὖ φασι πανδήμῳ πόλει
κήρυγμα θεῖναι τὸν στρατηγὸν ἀρτίως;
Ἔχεις τι κεἰσήκουσας; ἦ σε λανθάνει
πρὸς τοὺς φίλους στείχοντα τῶν ἐχθρῶν κακά;

ΙΣΜΗΝΗ
Ἐμοὶ μὲν οὐδεὶς μῦθος, Ἀντιγόνη, φίλων
οὔθ’ ἡδὺς οὔτ’ ἀλγεινὸς ἵκετ’, ἐξ ὅτου
δυοῖν ἀδελφοῖν ἐστερήθημεν δύο
μιᾷ θανόντων ἡμέρᾳ διπλῇ χερί·
ἐπεὶ δὲ φροῦδός ἐστιν Ἀργείων στρατὸς
ἐν νυκτὶ τῇ νῦν, οὐδὲν οἶδ’ ὑπέρτερον,
οὔτ’ εὐτυχοῦσα μᾶλλον οὔτ’ ἀτωμένη.

ΑΝ. Ἤιδη καλῶς καί σ’ ἐκτὸς αὐλείων πυλῶν
τοῦδ’ οὕνεκ’ ἐξέπεμπον, ὡς μόνη κλύοις.
ΙΣ. Τί δ’ ἔστι; δηλοῖς γάρ τι καλχαίνουσ’ ἔπος.

ΑΝ. Οὐ γὰρ τάφου νῷν τὼ κασιγνήτω Κρέων
τὸν μὲν προτίσας, τὸν δ’ ἀτιμάσας ἔχει;
Ἐτεοκλέα μέν, ὡς λέγουσι, σὺν δίκῃ

χρῆσθαι δικαιῶν καὶ νόμῳ, κατὰ χθονὸς
ἔκρυψε τοῖς ἔνερθεν ἔντιμον νεκροῖς·
τὸν δ’ ἀθλίως θανόντα Πολυνείκους νέκυν
ἀστοῖσί φασιν ἐκκεκηρῦχθαι τὸ μὴ
τάφῳ καλύψαι μηδὲ κωκῦσαί τινα,
ἐᾶν δ’ ἄκλαυτον, ἄταφον, οἰωνοῖς γλυκὺν
θησαυρὸν εἰσορῶσι πρὸς χάριν βορᾶς.
Τοιαῦτά φασι τὸν ἀγαθὸν Κρέοντα σοὶ
κἀμοί, λέγω γὰρ κἀμέ, κηρύξαντ’ ἔχειν,
καὶ δεῦρο νεῖσθαι ταῦτα τοῖσι μὴ εἰδόσιν
σαφῆ προκηρύξοντα, καὶ τὸ πρᾶγμ’ ἄγειν
οὐχ ὡς παρ’ οὐδέν, ἀλλ’ ὃς ἂν τούτων τι δρᾷ
φόνον προκεῖσθαι δημόλευστον ἐν πόλει.
Οὕτως ἔχει σοι ταῦτα, καὶ δείξεις τάχα
εἴτ’ εὐγενὴς πέφυκας εἴτ’ ἐσθλῶν κακή.

ΙΣ. Τί δ’, ὦ ταλαῖφρον, εἰ τάδ’ ἐν τούτοις, ἐγὼ
λύουσ’ ἂν εἶθ’ ἅπτουσα προσθείμην πλέον;

ΑΝ. Εἰ ξυμπονήσεις καὶ ξυνεργάσῃ σκόπει.

ΙΣ. Ποῖόν τι κινδύνευμα; ποῖ γνώμης ποτ’ εἶ;

ΑΝ. Εἰ τὸν νεκρὸν ξὺν τῇδε κουφιεῖς χερί.

ΙΣ. Ἦ γὰρ νοεῖς θάπτειν σφ’, ἀπόρρητον πόλει;
ΑΝ. Τὸν γοῦν ἐμὸν καὶ τὸν σόν, ἢν σὺ μὴ θέλῃς,

ἀδελφόν· οὐ γὰρ δὴ προδοῦσ’ ἁλώσομαι.

ΙΣ. Ὦ σχετλία, Κρέοντος ἀντειρηκότος;

ΑΝ. Ἀλλ’ οὐδὲν αὐτῷ τῶν ἐμῶν ‹μ’› εἴργειν μέτα.

ΙΣ. Οἴμοι· φρόνησον, ὦ κασιγνήτη, πατὴρ
50 ὡς νῷν ἀπεχθὴς δυσκλεής τ’ ἀπώλετο,
πρὸς αὐτοφώρων ἁμπλακημάτων διπλᾶς
ὄψεις ἀράξας αὐτὸς αὐτουργῷ χερί·
ἔπειτα μήτηρ καὶ γυνή, διπλοῦν ἔπος,
πλεκταῖσιν ἀρτάναισι λωβᾶται βίον·
55 τρίτον δ’ ἀδελφὼ δύο μίαν καθ’ ἡμέραν
αὐτοκτονοῦντε τὼ ταλαιπώρω μόρον
κοινὸν κατειργάσαντ’ ἐπαλλήλοιν χεροῖν.
Νῦν δ’ αὖ μόνα δὴ νὼ λελειμμένα σκόπει
ὅσῳ κάκιστ’ ὀλούμεθ’, εἰ νόμου βίᾳ
60 ψῆφον τυράννων ἢ κράτη παρέξιμεν.
Ἀλλ’ ἐννοεῖν χρὴ τοῦτο μὲν γυναῖχ’ ὅτι
ἔφυμεν, ὡς πρὸς ἄνδρας οὐ μαχουμένα·
ἔπειτα δ’ οὕνεκ’ ἀρχόμεσθ’ ἐκ κρεισσόνων
καὶ ταῦτ’ ἀκούειν κἄτι τῶνδ’ ἀλγίονα.
65 Ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν αἰτοῦσα τοὺς ὑπὸ χθονὸς
ξύγγνοιαν ἴσχειν, ὡς βιάζομαι τάδε,
τοῖς ἐν τέλει βεβῶσι πείσομαι· τὸ γὰρ
περισσὰ πράσσειν οὐκ ἔχει νοῦν οὐδένα.

ΑΝ. Οὔτ’ ἂν κελεύσαιμ’ οὔτ’ ἄν, εἰ θέλοις ἔτι
70 πράσσειν, ἐμοῦ γ’ ἂν ἡδέως δρῴης μέτα.

Ἀλλ’ ἴσθ’ ὁποία σοι δοκεῖ, κεῖνον δ’ ἐγὼ
θάψω· καλόν μοι τοῦτο ποιούσῃ θανεῖν.
Φίλη μετ’ αὐτοῦ κείσομαι, φίλου μέτα,
ὅσια πανουργήσασ’· ἐπεὶ πλείων χρόνος
ὃν δεῖ μ’ ἀρέσκειν τοῖς κάτω τῶν ἐνθάδε.
Ἐκεῖ γὰρ αἰεὶ κείσομαι· σοὶ δ’ εἰ δοκεῖ,
τὰ τῶν θεῶν ἔντιμ’ ἀτιμάσασ’ ἔχε.

ΙΣ. Ἐγὼ μὲν οὐκ ἄτιμα ποιοῦμαι, τὸ δὲ
βίᾳ πολιτῶν δρᾶν ἔφυν ἀμήχανος.
ΑΝ. Σὺ μὲν τάδ’ ἂν προὔχοι’, ἐγὼ δὲ δὴ τάφον
χώσουσ’ ἀδελφῷ φιλτάτῳ πορεύσομαι.

ΙΣ. Οἴμοι ταλαίνης, ὡς ὑπερδέδοικά σου.

ΑΝ. Μὴ ‘μοῦ προτάρβει· τὸν σὸν ἐξόρθου πότμον.

ΙΣ. Ἀλλ’ οὖν προμηνύσῃς γε τοῦτο μηδενὶ
τοὔργον, κρυφῇ δὲ κεῦθε, σὺν δ’ αὔτως ἐγώ.

ΑΝ. Οἴμοι, καταύδα· πολλὸν ἐχθίων ἔσῃ
σιγῶσ’, ἐὰν μὴ πᾶσι κηρύξῃς τάδε.

ΙΣ. Θερμὴν ἐπὶ ψυχροῖσι καρδίαν ἔχεις.

ΑΝ. Ἀλλ’ οἶδ’ ἀρέσκουσ’ οἷς μάλισθ’ ἁδεῖν με χρή.
90 ΙΣ. Εἰ καὶ δυνήσῃ γ’· ἀλλ’ ἀμηχάνων ἐρᾷς.

ΑΝ. Οὐκοῦν, ὅταν δὴ μὴ σθένω, πεπαύσομαι.

ΙΣ. Ἀρχὴν δὲ θηρᾶν οὐ πρέπει τἀμήχανα.

ΑΝ. Εἰ ταῦτα λέξεις, ἐχθαρῇ μὲν ἐξ ἐμοῦ,
ἐχθρὰ δὲ τῷ θανόντι προσκείσῃ δίκῃ.
95 Ἀλλ’ ἔα με καὶ τὴν ἐξ ἐμοῦ δυσβουλίαν
παθεῖν τὸ δεινὸν τοῦτο· πείσομαι γὰρ οὐ
τοσοῦτον οὐδὲν ὥστε μὴ οὐ καλῶς θανεῖν.

ΙΣ. Ἀλλ’, εἰ δοκεῖ σοι, στεῖχε· τοῦτο δ’ ἴσθ’ ὅτι
ἄνους μὲν ἔρχῃ, τοῖς φίλοις δ’ ὀρθῶς φίλη.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
100 Ἀκτὶς ἀελίου, τὸ κάλλιστον ἐπταπύλῳ φανὲν Str. 1 .
Θήβᾳ τῶν πρότερον φάος,
ἐφάνθης ποτ’, ὦ χρυσέας
ἀμέρας βλέφαρον, Διρκαίων ὑπὲρ ῥεέθρων μολοῦσα,
105 τὸν λεύκασπιν Ἀπιόθεν
φῶτα, βάντα πανσαγίᾳ
φυγάδα πρόδρομον, ὀξυτέρῳ

κινήσασα χαλινῷ.
Ὃν ἐφ᾽ ἡμετέρᾳ γῇ Πολυνείκης
ἀρθεὶς νεικέων ἐξ ἀμφιλόγων
‹ἤγαγεν ἐχθρόν· ὁ δ᾽› ὀξέα κλάζων
αἰετὸς εἰς γῆν ὡς ὑπερέπτη,
λευκῆς χιόνος πτέρυγι στεγανός,
πολλῶν μεθ᾽ ὅπλων
ξύν θ᾽ ἱπποκόμοις κορύθεσσιν.
Στὰς δ᾽ ὑπὲρ μελάθρων φονώσαισιν ἀμφιχανὼν κύκλῳ Ant. 1 .
λόγχαις ἑπτάπυλον στόμα,
ἔβα πρίν ποθ᾽ ἁμετέρων
αἱμάτων γένυσιν πλησθῆναί ‹τε› καὶ στεφάνωμα πύργων
πευκάενθ᾽ Ἥφαιστον ἐλεῖν.
Τοῖος ἀμφὶ νῶτ᾽ ἐτάθη
πάταγος Ἄρεος, ἀντιπάλου
δυσχείρωμα δράκοντος.
Ζεὺς γὰρ μεγάλης γλώσσης κόμπους
ὑπερεχθαίρει, καί σφας ἐσιδὼν
πολλῷ ῥεύματι προσνισσομένους,
χρυσοῦ καναχῆς ὑπερόπτας,
παλτῷ ῥιπτεῖ πυρὶ βαλβίδων
ἐπ᾽ ἄκρων ἤδη
νίκην ὁρμῶντ᾽ ἀλαλάξαι.
Ἀντιτύπᾳ δ᾽ ἐπὶ γᾷ πέσε τανταλωθεὶς Str. 2 .
πυρφόρος ὃς τότε μαινομέναᾳ ξὺν ὁρμᾷ
βακχεύων ἐπέπνει
ῥιπαῖς ἐχθίστων ἀνέμων.
Εἶχε δ᾽ ἄλλᾳ τὰ μέν,
ἄλλα δ᾽ ἐπ᾽ ἄλλοις ἐπενώμα στυφελίζων μέγας Ἄρης δεξιόσειρος.
Ἑπτὰ λοχαγοὶ γὰρ ἐφ᾽ ἑπτὰ πύλαις
ταχθέντες ἴσοι πρὸς ἴσους ἔλιπον
Ζηνὶ Τροπαίῳ πάγχαλκα τέλη,
πλὴν τοῖν στυγεροῖν, ὧ πατρὸς ἑνὸς
μητρός τε μιᾶς φύντε καθ᾽ αὑτοῖν
δικρατεῖς λόγχας στήσαντ᾽ ἔχετον
κοινοῦ θανάτου μέρος ἄμφω.
Ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἀ μεγαλώνυμος ἦλθε Νίκα Ant. 2 .
τᾷ πολυαρμάτῳ ἀντιχαρεῖσα Θήβᾳ,
ἐκ μὲν δὴ πολέμων

τῶν νῦν θέσθαι λησμοσύναν·
θεῶν δὲ ναοὺς χοροῖς
παννυχίοις πάτας ἐπέλθωμεν, ὁ Θήβας δ’ ἐλελίχθων Βάκχιος ἄρχοι.
Ἀλλ’, ὅδε γὰρ δὴ βασιλεὺς χώρας,
Κρέων ὁ Μενοικέως ‹ταγὸς› νεοχμὸς
νεαραῖσι θεῶν ἐπὶ συντυχίαις
χωρεῖ, τίνα δὴ μῆτιν ἐρέσσων,
ὅτι σύγκλητον τήνδε γερόντων
προὔθετο λέσχην,
κοινῷ κηρύγματι πέμψας.

ΚΡΕΩΝ
Ἄνδρες, τὰ μὲν δὴ πόλεος ἀσφαλῶς θεοὶ
πολλῷ σάλῳ σείσαντες ὤρθωσαν πάλιν·
ὑμᾶς δ’ ἐγὼ πομποῖσιν ἐκ πάντων δίχα
ἔστειλ’ ἱκέσθαι, τοῦτο μὲν τὰ Λαΐου
σέβοντας εἰδὼς εὖ θρόνων ἀεὶ κράτη,
τοῦτ’ αὖθις, ἡνίκ’ Οἰδίπους ὤρθου πόλιν
κἀπεὶ διώλετ’, ἀμφὶ τοὺς κείνων ἔτι
παῖδας μένοντας ἐμπέδοις φρονήμασιν.
Ὅτ’ οὖν ἐκεῖνοι πρὸς διπλῆς μοίρας μίαν
καθ’ ἡμέραν ὤλοντο παίσαντές τε καὶ
πληγέντες αὐτόχειρι σὺν μιάσματι,
ἐγὼ κράτη δὴ πάντα καὶ θρόνους ἔχω
γένους κατ’ ἀγχιστεῖα τῶν ὀλωλότων.
Ἀμήχανον δὲ παντὸς ἀνδρὸς ἐκμαθεῖν
ψυχήν τε καὶ φρόνημα καὶ γνώμην, πρὶν ἂν
ἀρχαῖς τε καὶ νόμοισιν ἐντριβὴς φανῇ.
Ἐμοὶ γὰρ ὅστις πᾶσαν εὐθύνων πόλιν
μὴ τῶν ἀρίστων ἅπτεται βουλευμάτων,
ἀλλ’ ἐκ φόβου του γλῶσσαν ἐγκλῄσας ἔχει,
κάκιστος εἶναι νῦν τε καὶ πάλαι δοκεῖ·
καὶ μείζον’ ὅστις ἀντὶ τῆς αὐτοῦ πάτρας
φίλον νομίζει, τοῦτον οὐδαμοῦ λέγω.
Ἐγὼ γάρ, ἴστω Ζεὺς ὁ πάνθ’ ὁρῶν ἀεί,
οὔτ’ ἂν σιωπήσαιμι τὴν ἄτην ὁρῶν

στείχουσαν ἀστοῖς ἀντὶ τῆς σωτηρίας,
οὔτ’ ἂν φίλον ποτ’ ἄνδρα δυσμενῆ χθονὸς
θείμην ἐμαυτῷ, τοῦτο γιγνώσκων ὅτι
ἥδ’ ἐστὶν ἡ σώζουσα καὶ ταύτης ἔπι
190 πλέοντες ὀρθῆς τοὺς φίλους ποιούμεθα·
τοιοῖσδ’ ἐγὼ νόμοισι τήνδ’ αὔξω πόλιν.
Καὶ νῦν ἀδελφὰ τῶνδε κηρύξας ἔχω
ἀστοῖσι παίδων τῶν ἀπ’ Οἰδίπου πέρι·
Ἐτεοκλέα μέν, ὃς πόλεως ὑπερμαχῶν
195 ὄλωλε τῆσδε, πάντ’ ἀριστεύσας δορί,
τάφῳ τε κρύψαι καὶ τὰ πάντ’ ἀφαγνίσαι
ἃ τοῖς ἀρίστοις ἔρχεται κάτω νεκροῖς·
τὸν δ’ αὖ ξύναιμον τοῦδε, Πολυνείκην λέγω,
ὃς γῆν πατρῴαν καὶ θεοὺς τοὺς ἐγγενεῖς
200 φυγὰς κατελθὼν ἠθέλησε μὲν πυρὶ
πρῆσαι κατάκρας, ἠθέλησε δ’ αἵματος
κοινοῦ πάσασθαι, τοὺς δὲ δουλώσας ἄγειν,
τοῦτον πόλει τῇδ’ ἐκκεκήρυκται τάφῳ
μήτε κτερίζειν μήτε κωκῦσαί τινα,
205 ἐᾶν δ’ ἄθαπτον καὶ πρὸς οἰωνῶν δέμας
καὶ πρὸς κυνῶν ἐδεστὸν αἰκισθέν τ’ ἰδεῖν.
Τοιόνδ’ ἐμὸν φρόνημα, κοὔποτ’ ἔκ γ’ ἐμοῦ
τιμὴν προέξουσ’ οἱ κακοὶ τῶν ἐνδίκων.
Ἀλλ’ ὅστις εὔνους τῇδε τῇ πόλει, θανὼν
210 καὶ ζῶν ὁμοίως ἐξ ἐμοῦ τιμήσεται.

ΧΟ. Σοὶ ταῦτ’ ἀρέσκει, παῖ Μενοικέως, ‹παθεῖν›,
τὸν τῇδε δύσνουν καὶ τὸν εὐμενῆ πόλει·
νόμῳ δὲ χρῆσθαι παντί πού γ’ ἔνεστί σοι
καὶ τῶν θανόντων χὠπόσοι ζῶμεν πέρι.
215 ΚΡ. Ὡς ἂν σκοποὶ νῦν ἦτε τῶν εἰρημένων -

ΧΟ. Νεωτέρῳ τῳ τοῦτο βαστάζειν πρόθες.

ΚΡ. Ἀλλ’ εἶσ’ ἑτοῖμοι τοῦ νεκροῦ γ’ ἐπίσκοποι.

ΧΟ. Τί δῆτ’ ἂν ἄλλο τοῦτ’ ἐπεντέλλοις ἔτι;

ΚΡ. Τὸ μὴ ‘πιχωρεῖν τοῖς ἀπιστοῦσιν τάδε.
220 ΧΟ. Οὐκ ἔστιν οὕτω μῶρος ὃς θανεῖν ἐρᾷ.

ΚΡ. Καὶ μὴν ὁ μισθός γ’ οὗτος· ἀλλ’ ὑπ’ ἐλπίδων
ἄνδρας τὸ κέρδος πολλάκις διώλεσεν.

ΦΥΛΑΞ
Ἄναξ, ἐρῶ μὲν οὐχ ὅπως τάχους ὕπο
δύσπνους ἱκάνω κοῦφον ἐξάρας πόδα.
225 Πολλὰς γὰρ ἔσχον φροντίδων ἐπιστάσεις,
ὁδοῖς κυκλῶν ἐμαυτὸν εἰς ἀναστροφήν·
ψυχὴ γὰρ ἡὗδα πολλά μοι μυθουμένη·
“Τάλας, τί χωρεῖς οἱ μολὼν δώσεις δίκην;
τλήμων, μενεῖς αὖ; κεἰ τάδ’ εἴσεται Κρέων
230 ἄλλου παρ’ ἀνδρός, πῶς σὺ δῆτ’ οὐκ ἀλγυνῇ;”
Τοιαῦθ’ ἑλίσσων ἤνυτον σχολῇ ταχύς,
χοὕτως ὁδὸς βραχεῖα γίγνεται μακρά.
Τέλος γε μέντοι δεῦρ’ ἐνίκησεν μολεῖν
σοί, κεἰ τὸ μηδὲν ἐξερῶ, - φράσω δ’ ὅμως.
235 Τῆς ἐλπίδος γὰρ ἔρχομαι δεδραγμένος,
τὸ μὴ παθεῖν ἂν ἄλλο πλὴν τὸ μόρσιμον.

ΚΡ. Τί δ’ ἐστὶν ἀνθ’ οὗ τήνδ’ ἔχεις ἀθυμίαν;

ΦΥ. Φράσαι θέλω σοι πρῶτα τἀμαυτοῦ· τὸ γὰρ
πρᾶγμ’ οὔτ’ ἔδρασ’ οὔτ’ εἶδον ὅστις ἦν ὁ δρῶν,
240 οὐδ’ ἂν δικαίως ἐς κακὸν πέσοιμί τι.

ΚΡ. Εὖ γε στοχάζῃ κἀποφράγνυσαι κύκλῳ
τὸ πρᾶγμα· δηλοῖς δ’ ὥς τι σημαίνων νέον.

ΦΥ. Τὰ δεινὰ γάρ τοι προστίθησ’ ὄκνον πολύν.

ΚΡ. Οὔκουν ἐρεῖς ποτ’, εἶτ’ ἀπαλλαχθεὶς ἄπει;
245 ΦΥ. Καὶ δὴ λέγω σοι· τὸν νεκρόν τις ἀρτίως
θάψας βέβηκε κἀπὶ χρωτὶ διψίαν
κόνιν παλύνας κἀφαγιστεύσας ἃ χρή.

ΚΡ. Τί φῄς; τίς ἀνδρῶν ἦν ὁ τολμήσας τάδε;

ΦΥ. Οὐκ οἶδ’· ἐκεῖ γὰρ οὔτε του γενῆδος ἦν
250 πλῆγμ’, οὐ δικέλλης ἐκβολή· στύφλος δὲ γῆ
καὶ χέρσος, ἀρρὼξ οὐδ’ ἐπημαξευμένη
τροχοῖσιν, ἀλλ’ ἄσημος οὐργάτης τις ἦν.
Ὅπως δ’ ὁ πρῶτος ἡμὶν ἡμεροσκόπος
δείκνυσι, πᾶσι θαῦμα δυσχερὲς παρῆν·
255 ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἠφάνιστο, τυμβήρης μὲν οὔ,

λεπτὴ δ’ ἄγος φεύγοντος ὡς ἐπῆν κόνις.
Σημεῖα δ’ οὔτε θηρὸς οὔτε του κυνῶν
ἐλθόντος, οὐ σπάσαντος, ἐξεφαίνετο.
Λόγοι δ’ ἐν ἀλλήλοισιν ἐρρόθουν κακοί,
260 φύλαξ ἐλέγχων φύλακα, κἂν ἐγίγνετο
πληγὴ τελευτῶσ’, οὐδ’ ὁ κωλύσων παρῆν.
Εἷς γάρ τις ἦν ἕκαστος οὐξειργασμένος,
κοὐδεὶς ἐναργής, ἀλλ’ ἔφευγε μὴ εἰδέναι.
Ἦμεν δ’ ἑτοῖμοι καὶ μύδρους αἴρειν χεροῖν,
265 καὶ πῦρ διέρπειν, καὶ θεοὺς ὁρκωμοτεῖν
τὸ μήτε δρᾶσαι μήτε τῳ ξυνειδέναι
τὸ πρᾶγμα βουλεύσαντι μήτ’ εἰργασμένῳ.
Τέλος δ’ ὅτ’ οὐδὲν ἦν ἐρευνῶσιν πλέον,
λέγει τις εἷς ὃς πάντας ἐς πέδον κάρα
270 νεῦσαι φόβῳ προὔτρεψεν· οὐ γὰρ εἴχομεν
οὔτ’ ἀντιφωνεῖν οὔθ’ ὅπως δρῶντες καλῶς
πράξαιμεν. Ἦν δ’ ὁ μῦθος ὡς ἀνοιστέον
σοὶ τοὔργον εἴη τοῦτο κοὐχὶ κρυπτέον.
Καὶ ταῦτ’ ἐνίκα, κἀμὲ τὸν δυσδαίμονα
275 πάλος καθαιρεῖ τοῦτο τἀγαθὸν λαβεῖν.
Πάρειμι δ’ ἄκων οὐχ ἑκοῦσιν, οἶδ’ ὅτι·
στέργει γὰρ οὐδεὶς ἄγγελον κακῶν ἐπῶν.

ΧΟ. Ἄναξ, ἐμοί τοι μή τι καὶ θεήλατον
τοὔργον τόδ’ ἡ ξύννοια βουλεύει πάλαι.
280 ΚΡ. Παῦσαι, πρὶν ὀργῆς κἀμὲ μεστῶσαι λέγων,
μὴ ‘φευρεθῇς ἄνους τε καὶ γέρων ἅμα.
Λέγεις γὰρ οὐκ ἀνεκτά, δαίμονας λέγων
πρόνοιαν ἴσχειν τοῦδε τοῦ νεκροῦ πέρι.
Πότερον ὑπερτιμῶντες ὡς εὐεργέτην
285 ἔκρυπτον αὐτόν, ὅστις ἀμφικίονας
ναοὺς πυρώσων ἦλθε κἀναθήματα
καὶ γῆν ἐκείνων καὶ νόμους διασκεδῶν;
ἢ τοὺς κακοὺς τιμῶντας εἰσορᾷς θεούς;
Οὐκ ἔστιν· ἀλλὰ ταῦτα καὶ πάλαι πόλεως
290 ἄνδρες μόλις φέροντες ἐρρόθουν ἐμοί,

κρυφῇ κάρα σείοντες, οὐδ’ ὑπὸ ζυγῷ
λόφον δικαίως εἶχον, ὡς στέργειν ἐμέ.
Ἐκ τῶνδε τούτους ἐξεπίσταμαι καλῶς
παρηγμένους μισθοῖσιν εἰργάσθαι τάδε.
Οὐδὲν γὰρ ἀνθρώποισιν οἷον ἄργυρος
κακὸν νόμισμ’ ἔβλαστε· τοῦτο καὶ πόλεις
πορθεῖ, τόδ’ ἄνδρας ἐξανίστησιν δόμων,
τόδ’ ἐκδιδάσκει καὶ παραλλάσσει φρένας
χρηστὰς πρὸς αἰσχρὰ πράγματθ’ ἵστασθαι βροτῶν
πανουργίας δ’ ἔδειξεν ἀνθρώποις ἔχειν
καὶ παντὸς ἔργου δυσσέβειαν εἰδέναι.
Ὅσοι δὲ μισθαρνοῦντες ἤνυσαν τάδε,
χρόνῳ ποτ’ ἐξέπραξαν ὡς δοῦναι δίκην.
Ἀλλ’, εἴπερ ἴσχει Ζεὺς ἔτ’ ἐξ ἐμοῦ σέβας,
εὖ τοῦτ’ ἐπίστασ’, ὅρκιος δέ σοι λέγω,
εἰ μὴ τὸν αὐτόχειρα τοῦδε τοῦ τάφου
εὑρόντες ἐκφανεῖτ’ ἐς ὀφθαλμοὺς ἐμούς,
οὐχ ὑμὶν Ἅιδης μοῦνος ἀρκέσει, πρὶν ἂν
ζῶντες κρεμαστοὶ τήνδε δηλώσηθ’ ὕβριν,
ἵν’ εἰδότες τὸ κέρδος ἔνθεν οἰστέον
τὸ λοιπὸν ἁρπάζητε καὶ μάθηθ’ ὅτι
οὐκ ἐξ ἅπαντος δεῖ τὸ κερδαίνειν φιλεῖν.
Ἐκ τῶν γὰρ αἰσχρῶν λημμάτων τοὺς πλείονας
ἀτωμένους ἴδοις ἂν ἢ σεσωσμένους.
ΦΥ. Εἰπεῖν δὲ δώσεις, ἢ στραφεὶς οὕτως ἴω;

ΚΡ. Οὐκ οἶσθα καὶ νῦν ὡς ἀνιαρῶς λέγεις;

ΦΥ. Ἐν τοῖσιν ὠσὶν ἢ ‘πὶ τῇ ψυχῇ δάκνῃ;

ΚΡ. Τί δὲ ῥυθμίζεις τὴν ἐμὴν λύπην ὅπου;

ΦΥ. Ὁ δρῶν σ’ ἀνιᾷ τὰς φρένας, τὰ δ’ ὦτ’ ἐγώ.
320 ΚΡ. Οἴμ’, ὡς λάληµα δῆλον ἐκπεφυκὸς εἶ.

ΦΥ. Οὔκουν τό γ’ ἔργον τοῦτο ποιήσας ποτέ.

ΚΡ. Καὶ ταῦτ’ ἐπ’ ἀργύρῳ γε τὴν ψυχὴν προδούς.

ΦΥ. Φεῦ·
ἦ δεινὸν ᾧ δοκεῖ γε καὶ ψευδῆ δοκεῖν.

ΚΡ. Κόμψευέ νυν τὴν δόξαν· εἰ δὲ ταῦτα µὴ
325 φανεῖτέ µοι τοὺς δρῶντας, ἐξερεῖθ’ ὅτι
τὰ δειλὰ κέρδη πηµονὰς ἐργάζεται.

ΦΥ. Ἀλλ’ εὐρεθείη µὲν µάλιστ’· ἐὰν δέ τοι
ληφθῇ τε καὶ µή, τοῦτο γὰρ τύχη κρινεῖ,
οὐκ ἔσθ’ ὅπως ὄψει σὺ δεῦρ’ ἐλθόντα µε.
330 Καὶ νῦν γὰρ ἐκτὸς ἐλπίδος γνώµης τ’ ἐµῆς
σωθεὶς ὀφείλω τοῖς θεοῖς πολλὴν χάριν.

ΧΟ. Πολλὰ τὰ δεινὰ κοὐδὲν ἀνθρώπου δεινότερον πέλει· Str. 1
.

τοῦτο καὶ πολιοῦ πέραν
πόντου χειμερίῳ νότῳ
χωρεῖ, περιβρυχίοισιν
περῶν ὑπ’ οἴδμασιν, θεῶν τε τὰν ὑπερτάταν, Γᾶν
ἄφθιτον, ἀκαμάταν, ἀποτρύεται,
ἰλλομένων ἀρότρων ἔτος εἰς ἔτος,
ἱππείῳ γένει πολεύων.
Κουφονόων τε φῦλον ὀρνίθων ἀμφιβαλὼν ἄγει, Ant. 1 .
καὶ θηρῶν ἀγρίων ἔθνη
πόντου τ’ εἰναλίαν φύσιν
σπείραισι δικτυοκλώστοις
περιφραδὴς ἀνήρ· κρατεῖ δὲ μηχαναῖς ἀγραύλου
θηρὸς ὀρεσσιβάτα, λασιαύχενά θ’
ἵππον ‹ὑπ›άξεται ἀμφίλοφον ζυγὸν
οὔρειόν τ’ ἀκμῆτα ταῦρον.
Καὶ φθέγμα καὶ ἀνεμόεν Str. 2 .
φρόνημα καὶ ἀστυνόμους
ὀργὰς ἐδιδάξατο, καὶ δυσαύλων
πάγων ‹ἐν›αίθρεια καὶ
δύσομβρα φεύγειν βέλη
παντοπόρος· ἄπορος ἐπ’ οὐδὲν ἔρχεται
τὸ μέλλον· Ἅιδα μόνον
φεῦξιν οὐκ ἐπάξεται, νόσων δ’ ἀμηχάνων φυγὰς
ξυμπέφρασται.
Σοφόν τι τὸ μηχανόεν Ant. 2 .
τέχνας ὑπὲρ ἐλπίδ’ ἔχων,
τοτὲ μὲν κακόν, ἄλλοτ’ ἐπ’ ἐσθλὸν ἕρπει,
νόμους παρείρων χθονὸς
θεῶν τ’ ἔνορκον δίκαν
ὑψίπολις· ἄπολις ὅτῳ τὸ μὴ καλὸν
ξύνεστι τόλμας χάριν·
μήτ’ ἐμοὶ παρέστιος γένοιτο μήτ’ ἴσον φρονῶν
ὃς τάδ’ ἔρδοι.
Ἐς δαιμόνιον τέρας ἀμφινοῶ
τόδε· πῶς εἰδὼς ἀντιλογήσω
τῆνδ’ οὐκ εἶναι παῖδ’ Ἀντιγόνην;
Ὦ δύστηνος καὶ δυστήνου
πατρὸς Οἰδιπόδα,
τί ποτ’; οὐ δή που σέ γ’ ἀπιστοῦσαν

τοῖς βασιλείοισ‹ιν› ἄγουσι νόμοις
καὶ ἐν ἀφροσύνῃ καθελόντες;

ΦΥ. Ἥδ’ ἔστ’ ἐκείνη τοὔργον ἡ ‘ξειργασμένη·
τήνδ’ εἵλομεν θάπτουσαν· ἀλλὰ ποῦ Κρέων;

ΧΟ. Ὅδ’ ἐκ δόμων ἄψορρος εἰς δέον περᾷ.

ΚΡ. Τί δ’ ἔστι; ποίᾳ ξύμμετρος προὔβην τύχῃ;

ΦΥ. Ἄναξ, βροτοῖσιν οὐδέν ἐστ’ ἀπώμοτον·
ψεύδει γὰρ ἡ ‘πίνοια τὴν γνώμην· ἐπεὶ
σχολῇ ποθ’ ἥξειν δεῦρ’ ἂν ἐξηύχουν ἐγὼ
ταῖς σαῖς ἀπειλαῖς αἷς ἐχειμάσθην τότε.
Ἀλλ’, ἡ γὰρ ἐκτὸς καὶ παρ’ ἐλπίδας χαρὰ
ἔοικεν ἄλλῃ μῆκος οὐδὲν ἡδονῇ,
ἥκω, δι’ ὅρκων καίπερ ὢν ἀπώμοτος,
κόρην ἄγων τήνδ’, ἣ καθευρέθη τάφον
κοσμοῦσα. Κλῆρος ἐνθάδ’ οὐκ ἐπάλλετο,
ἀλλ’ ἔστ’ ἐμὸν θοὔρμαιον, οὐκ ἄλλου, τόδε.
Καὶ νῦν, ἄναξ, τήνδ’ αὐτὸς ὡς θέλεις λαβὼν
καὶ κρῖνε κἀξέλεγχ’· ἐγὼ δ’ ἐλεύθερος
δίκαιός εἰμι τῶνδ’ ἀπηλλάχθαι κακῶν.

ΚΡ. Ἄγεις δὲ τήνδε τῷ τρόπῳ πόθεν λαβών;

ΦΥ. Αὕτη τὸν ἄνδρ’ ἔθαπτε· πάντ’ ἐπίστασαι.

ΚΡ. Ἦ καὶ ξυνίης καὶ λέγεις ὀρθῶς ἃ φῄς;

ΦΥ. Ταύτην γ’ ἰδὼν θάπτουσαν ὃν σὺ τὸν νεκρὸν
405 ἀπεῖπας. Ἆρ’ ἔνδηλα καὶ σαφῆ λέγω;

ΚΡ. Καὶ πῶς ὁρᾶται κἀπίληπτος ᾔρέθη;

ΦΥ. Τοιοῦτον ἦν τὸ πρᾶγμ’· ὅπως γὰρ ἥκομεν
πρὸς σοῦ τὰ δείν’ ἐκεῖν’ ἐπηπειλημένοι,
πᾶσαν κόνιν σήραντες ἣ κατεῖχε τὸν
410 νέκυν, μυδῶν τε σῶμα γυμνώσαντες εὖ,
καθήμεθ’ ἄκρων ἐκ πάγων ὑπήνεμοι,
ὀσμὴν ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ μὴ βάλῃ πεφευγότες,
ἐγερτὶ κινῶν ἄνδρ’ ἀνὴρ ἐπιρρόθοις
κακοῖσιν, εἴ τις τοῦδ’ ἀφειδήσοι πόνου.
415 Χρόνον τάδ’ ἦν τοσοῦτον, ἔστ’ ἐν αἰθέρι
μέσῳ κατέστη λαμπρὸς ἡλίου κύκλος
καὶ καῦμ’ ἔθαλπε· καὶ τότ’ ἐξαίφνης χθονὸς
τυφὼς ἀείρας σκηπτόν, οὐράνιον ἄχος,
πίμπλησι πεδίον πᾶσαν αἰκίζων φόβην
420 ὕλης πεδιάδος, ἐν δ’ ἐμεστώθη μέγας
αἰθήρ· μύσαντες δ’ εἴχομεν θείαν νόσον.
Καὶ τοῦδ’ ἀπαλλαγέντος ἐν χρόνῳ μακρῷ,
ἡ παῖς ὁρᾶται κἀνακωκύει πικρᾶς
ὄρνιθος ὀξὺν φθόγγον, ὡς ὅταν κενῆς
425 εὐνῆς νεοσσῶν ὀρφανὸν βλέψῃ λέχος·

οὕτω δὲ χαὔτη, ψιλὸν ὡς ὁρᾷ νέκυν,
γόοισιν ἐξώμωξεν, ἐκ δ’ ἀρὰς κακὰς
ἠρᾶτο τοῖσι τοὔργον ἐξειργασμένοις.
Καὶ χερσὶν εὐθὺς διψίαν φέρει κόνιν,
430 ἔκ τ’ εὐκροτήτου χαλκέας ἄρδην πρόχου
χοαῖσι τρισπόνδοισι τὸν νέκυν στέφει.
Χἡμεῖς ἰδόντες ἱέμεσθα, σὺν δέ νιν
θηρώμεθ’ εὐθὺς οὐδὲν ἐκπεπληγμένην,
καὶ τάς τε πρόσθεν τάς τε νῦν ἠλέγχομεν
435 πράξεις· ἄπαρνος δ’ οὐδενὸς καθίστατο,
ἄμ’ ἡδέως ἔμοιγε κἀλγεινῶς ἄμα.
Τὸ μὲν γὰρ αὐτὸν ἐκ κακῶν πεφευγέναι
ἥδιστον, ἐς κακὸν δὲ τοὺς φίλους ἄγειν
ἀλγεινόν· ἀλλὰ πάντα ταῦθ’ ἥσσω λαβεῖν
440 ἐμοὶ πέφυκεν τῆς ἐμῆς σωτηρίας.

ΚΡ. Σὲ δή, σὲ τὴν νεύουσαν εἰς πέδον κάρα,
φῄς, ἢ καταρνῇ μὴ δεδρακέναι τάδε;

ΑΝ. Καὶ φημὶ δρᾶσαι κοὐκ ἀπαρνοῦμαι τὸ μή.

ΚΡ. Σὺ μὲν κομίζοις ἂν σεαυτὸν ᾗ θέλεις
445 ἔξω βαρείας αἰτίας ἐλεύθερον·
σὺ δ’ εἰπέ μοι μὴ μῆκος, ἀλλὰ συντόμως,
ᾔδησθα κηρυχθέντα μὴ πράσσειν τάδε;

ΑΝ. Ἤιδη· τί δ’ οὐκ ἔμελλον; ἐμφανῆ γὰρ ἦν.

ΚΡ. Καὶ δῆτ’ ἐτόλμας τούσδ’ ὑπερβαίνειν νόμους;
ΑΝ. Οὐ γάρ τί μοι Ζεὺς ἦν ὁ κηρύξας τάδε,
οὐδ’ ἡ ξύνοικος τῶν κάτω θεῶν Δίκη·
οὐ τούσδ’ ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν ὥρισαν νόμους·
οὐδὲ σθένειν τοσοῦτον ὠόμην τὰ σὰ
κηρύγματ’ ὥστ’ ἄγραπτα κἀσφαλῆ θεῶν
νόμιμα δύνασθαι θνητὸν ὄντ’ ὑπερδραμεῖν.
Οὐ γάρ τι νῦν γε κἀχθές, ἀλλ’ ἀεί ποτε
ζῇ ταῦτα, κοὐδεὶς οἶδεν ἐξ ὅτου ‘φάνη.
Τούτων ἐγὼ οὐκ ἔμελλον, ἀνδρὸς οὐδενὸς
φρόνημα δείσασ’, ἐν θεοῖσι τὴν δίκην
δώσειν· θανουμένη γὰρ ἐξῄδη - τί δ’ οὔ; -
κεἰ μὴ σὺ προὐκήρυξας. Εἰ δὲ τοῦ χρόνου
πρόσθεν θανοῦμαι, κέρδος αὔτ’ ἐγὼ λέγω·
ὅστις γὰρ ἐν πολλοῖσιν ὡς ἐγὼ κακοῖς
ζῇ, πῶς ὅδ’ οὐχὶ κατθανὼν κέρδος φέρει;
Οὕτως ἔμοιγε τοῦδε τοῦ μόρου τυχεῖν
παρ’ οὐδὲν ἄλγος· ἀλλ’ ἄν, εἰ τὸν ἐξ ἐμῆς
μητρὸς θανόντ’ ἄθαπτον ἠνσχόμην νέκυν,
κείνοις ἂν ἤλγουν· τοῖσδε δ’ οὐκ ἀλγύνομαι.
Σοὶ δ’ εἰ δοκῶ νῦν μῶρα δρῶσα τυγχάνειν,
σχεδόν τι μώρῳ μωρίαν ὀφλισκάνω.

ΧΟ. Δηλοῖ τὸ γέννημ’ ὠμὸν ἐξ ὠμοῦ πατρὸς
τῆς παιδός· εἴκειν δ’ οὐκ ἐπίσταται κακοῖς.

ΚΡ. Ἀλλ’ ἴσθι τοι τὰ σκλήρ’ ἄγαν φρονήματα
πίπτειν μάλιστα, καὶ τὸν ἐγκρατέστατον
σίδηρον ὀπτὸν ἐκ πυρὸς περισκελῆ
θραυσθέντα καὶ ῥαγέντα πλεῖστ’ ἂν εἰσίδοις.
Σμικρῷ χαλινῷ δ’ οἶδα τοὺς θυμουμένους
ἵππους καταρτυθέντας· οὐ γὰρ ἐκπέλει
φρονεῖν μέγ’ ὅστις δοῦλός ἐστι τῶν πέλας.

Αὕτη δ’ ὑβρίζειν μὲν τότ’ ἐξηπίστατο
νόμους ὑπερβαίνουσα τοὺς προκειμένους·
ὕβρις δ’, ἐπεὶ δέδρακεν, ἥδε δευτέρα,
τούτοις ἐπαυχεῖν καὶ δεδρακυῖαν γελᾶν.
Ἢ νῦν ἐγὼ μὲν οὐκ ἀνήρ, αὕτη δ’ ἀνήρ,
εἰ ταῦτ’ ἀνατὶ τῇδε κείσεται κράτη.
Ἀλλ’ εἴτ’ ἀδελφῆς εἴθ’ ὁμαιμονεστέρα
τοῦ παντὸς ἡμῖν Ζηνὸς Ἑρκείου κυρεῖ,
αὐτή τε χἡ ξύναιμος οὐκ ἀλύξετον
μόρου κακίστου· καὶ γὰρ οὖν κείνην ἴσον
ἐπαιτιῶμαι τοῦδε βουλεῦσαι τάφου.
Καί νιν καλεῖτ’· ἔσω γὰρ εἶδον ἀρτίως
λυσσῶσαν αὐτὴν οὐδ’ ἐπήβολον φρενῶν.
Φιλεῖ δ’ ὁ θυμὸς πρόσθεν ᾑρῆσθαι κλοπεὺς
τῶν μηδὲν ὀρθῶς ἐν σκότῳ τεχνωμένων.
Μισῶ γε μέντοι χὥταν ἐν κακοῖσί τις
ἁλοὺς ἔπειτα τοῦτο καλλύνειν θέλῃ.

ΑΝ. Θέλεις τι μεῖζον ἢ κατακτεῖναί μ’ ἐλών;

ΚΡ. Ἐγὼ μὲν οὐδέν· τοῦτ’ ἔχων ἅπαντ’ ἔχω.

ΑΝ. Τί δῆτα μέλλεις; ὡς ἐμοὶ τῶν σῶν λόγων
ἀρεστὸν οὐδέν, μηδ’ ἀρεσθείη ποτέ·
οὕτω δὲ καὶ σοὶ τἄμ’ ἀφανδάνοντ’ ἔφυ.
Καίτοι πόθεν κλέος γ’ ἂν εὐκλεέστερον
κατέσχον ἢ τὸν αὐτάδελφον ἐν τάφῳ
τιθεῖσα; τούτοις τοῦτο πᾶσιν ἀνδάνειν
λέγοιτ’ ἄν, εἰ μὴ γλῶσσαν ἐγκλῄσοι φόβος.
Ἀλλ’ ἡ τυραννὶς πολλά τ’ ἄλλ’ εὐδαιμονεῖ
κἄξεστιν αὐτῇ δρᾶν λέγειν θ’ ἃ βούλεται.

ΚΡ. Σὺ τοῦτο μούνη τῶνδε Καδμείων ὁρᾷς.

ΑΝ. Ὁρῶσι χοὖτοι· σοὶ δ’ ὑπίλλουσι στόμα.
510 ΚΡ. Σὺ δ’ οὐκ ἐπαιδῇ, τῶνδε χωρὶς εἰ φρονεῖς;

ΑΝ. Οὐδὲν γὰρ αἰσχρὸν τοὺς ὁμοσπλάγχνους σέβειν.

ΚΡ. Οὔκουν ὅμαιμος χὠ καταντίον θανών;

ΑΝ. Ὅμαιμος ἐκ μιᾶς τε καὶ ταὐτοῦ πατρός.

ΚΡ. Πῶς δῆτ’ ἐκείνῳ δυσσεβῆ τιμᾷς χάριν;
515 ΑΝ. Οὐ μαρτυρήσει ταῦθ’ ὁ κατθανὼν νέκυς.

ΚΡ. Εἴ τοί σφε τιμᾷς ἐξ ἴσου τῷ δυσσεβεῖ.

ΑΝ. Οὐ γάρ τι δοῦλος. ἀλλ’ ἀδελφὸς ὤλετο.

ΚΡ. Πορθῶν δὲ τήνδε γῆν· ὁ δ’ ἀντιστὰς ὕπερ.

ΑΝ. Ὅμως ὅ γ’ Ἅιδης τοὺς νόμους τούτους ποθεῖ.
ΚΡ. Ἀλλ’ οὐχ ὁ χρηστὸς τῷ κακῷ λαχεῖν ἴσος.

ΑΝ. Τίς οἶδεν εἰ κάτω ‘στὶν εὐαγῆ τάδε;

ΚΡ. Οὔτοι ποθ’ οὐχθρός, οὐδ’ ὅταν θάνῃ, φίλος.

ΑΝ. Οὔτοι συνέχθειν, ἀλλὰ συμφιλεῖν ἔφυν.

ΚΡ. Κάτω νυν ἐλθοῦσ’, εἰ φιλητέον, φίλει
κείνους· ἐμοῦ δὲ ζῶντος οὐκ ἄρξει γυνή.

ΧΟ. Καὶ μὴν πρὸ πυλῶν ἥδ’ Ἰσμήνη,
φιλάδελφα κάτω δάκρυ’ εἰβομένη·
νεφέλη δ’ ὀφρύων ὕπερ αἱματόεν
ῥέθος αἰσχύνει,
τέγγουσ’ εὐῶπα παρειάν.

ΚΡ. Σὺ δ’, ἣ κατ’ οἴκους ὡς ἔχιδν’ ὑφειμένη
λήθουσά μ’ ἐξέπινες, οὐδ’ ἐμάνθανον

τρέφων δύ’ ἄτα κἀπαναστάσεις θρόνων,

φέρ’, εἰπὲ δή μοι, καὶ σὺ τοῦδε τοῦ τάφου
φήσεις μετασχεῖν, ἢ ‘ξομῇ τὸ μὴ εἰδέναι;

ΙΣ. Δέδρακα τοὔργον, εἴπερ ἥδ’ ὁμορροθεῖ,
καὶ ξυμμετίσχω καὶ φέρω τῆς αἰτίας.

ΑΝ. Ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἐάσει τοῦτό γ’ ἡ Δίκη σ’, ἐπεὶ
οὔτ’ ἠθέλησας οὔτ’ ἐγὼ ‘κοινωσάμην.
ΙΣ. Ἀλλ’ ἐν κακοῖς τοῖς σοῖσιν οὐκ αἰσχύνομαι
ξύμπλουν ἐμαυτὴν τοῦ πάθους ποιουμένη.

ΑΝ. Ὧν τοὔργον Ἅιδης χοἰ κάτω ξυνίστορες·
λόγοις δ’ ἐγὼ φιλοῦσαν οὐ στέργω φίλην.

ΙΣ. Μήτοι, κασιγνήτη, μ’ ἀτιμάσῃς τὸ μὴ οὐ
θανεῖν τε σὺν σοὶ τὸν θανόντα θ’ ἁγνίσαι.

ΑΝ. Μή μοι θάνῃς σὺ κοινά, μηδ’ ἃ μὴ ‘θιγες
ποιοῦ σεαυτῆς· ἀρκέσω θνῄσκουσ’ ἐγώ.

ΙΣ. Καὶ τίς βίος μοι σοῦ λελειμμένῃ φίλος;

ΑΝ. Κρέοντ’ ἐρώτα· τοῦδε γὰρ σὺ κηδεμών.

ΙΣ. Τί ταῦτ’ ἀνιᾷς μ’ οὐδὲν ὠφελουμένη;

ΑΝ. Ἀλγοῦσα μὲν δῆτ’, εἰ γέλωτ’ ἐν σοὶ γελῶ.

ΙΣ. Τί δῆτ’ ἂν ἀλλὰ νῦν σ’ ἔτ’ ὠφελοῖμ’ ἐγώ;

ΑΝ. Σῶσον σεαυτήν· οὐ φθονῶ σ’ ὑπεκφυγεῖν.

ΙΣ. Οἴμοι τάλαινα, κἀμπλάκω τοῦ σοῦ μόρου;

ΑΝ. Σὺ μὲν γὰρ εἵλου ζῆν, ἐγὼ δὲ κατθανεῖν.

ΙΣ. Ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἐπ’ ἀρρήτοις γε τοῖς ἐμοῖς λόγοις.

ΑΝ. Καλῶς σὺ μὲν τοῖς, τοῖς δ’ ἐγὼ ‘δόκουν φρονεῖν.

ΙΣ. Καὶ μὴν ἴση νῷν ἐστιν ἡ ‘ξαμαρτία.

ΑΝ. Θάρσει· σὺ μὲν ζῇς, ἡ δ’ ἐμὴ ψυχὴ πάλαι
τέθνηκεν, ὥστε τοῖς θανοῦσιν ὠφελεῖν.

ΚΡ. Τὼ παῖδε φημὶ τώδε τὴν μὲν ἀρτίως
ἄνουν πεφάνθαι, τὴν δ’ ἀφ’ οὗ τὰ πρῶτ’ ἔφυ.

ΙΣ. Οὐ γάρ ποτ’, ὦναξ, οὐδ’ ὃς ἂν βλάστῃ μένει
νοῦς τοῖς κακῶς πράσσουσιν, ἀλλ’ ἐξίσταται.
565 ΚΡ. Σοὶ γοῦν, ὅθ’ εἷλου σὺν κακοῖς πράσσειν κακά.

ΙΣ. Τί γὰρ μόνῃ μοι τῆσδ’ ἄτερ βιώσιμον;

ΚΡ. Ἀλλ’ “ἥδε” μέντοι μὴ λέγ’· οὐ γὰρ ἔστ’ ἔτι.

ΙΣ. Ἀλλὰ κτενεῖς νυμφεῖα τοῦ σαυτοῦ τέκνου;

ΚΡ. Ἀρώσιμοι γὰρ χἀτέρων εἰσὶν γύαι.
570 ΙΣ. Οὐχ ὥς γ’ ἐκείνῳ τῇδέ τ’ ἦν ἠρμοσμένα.

ΚΡ. Κακὰς ἐγὼ γυναῖκας υἱέσι στυγῶ.

ΙΣ. Ὦ φίλταθ’ Αἵμων, ὥς σ’ ἀτιμάζει πατήρ.

ΚΡ. Ἄγαν γε λυπεῖς καὶ σὺ καὶ τὸ σὸν λέχος.

ΧΟ. Ἦ γὰρ στερήσεις τῆσδε τὸν σαυτοῦ γόνον;
ΚΡ. Ἄιδης ὁ παύσων τούσδε τοὺς γάμους ἐμοί.

ΧΟ. Δεδογμέν’, ὡς ἔοικε, τήνδε κατθανεῖν.

ΚΡ. Καὶ σοί γε κἀμοί. Μὴ τριβὰς ἔτ’, ἀλλά νιν
κομίζετ’ εἴσω, δμῶες· ἐκδέτας δὲ χρὴ
γυναῖκας εἶναι τάσδε μηδ’ ἀνειμένας.
Φεύγουσι γάρ τοι χοἰ θρασεῖς, ὅταν πέλας
ἤδη τὸν ᾅδην εἰσορῶσι τοῦ βίου.

ΧΟ. Εὐδαίμονες οἷσι κακῶν ἄγευστος αἰών· Str. 1 .
οἷς γὰρ ἂν σεισθῇ θεόθεν δόμος, ἄτας
οὐδὲν ἐλλείπει γενεᾶς ἐπὶ πλῆθος ἕρπον·
ὅμοιον ὥστε ποντίας
οἶδμα, δυσπνόοις ὅταν
Θρῄσσῃσιν ἔρεβος ὕφαλον ἐπιδράμῃ πνοαῖς,
κυλίνδει βυσσόθεν
κελαινὰν θῖνα καὶ δυσάνεμοι
στόνῳ βρέμουσιν ἀντιπλῆγες ἀκταί.
Ἀρχαῖα τὰ Λαβδακιδᾶν οἴκων ὁρῶμαι Ant. 1 .
πήματα φθιμένων ἐπὶ πήμασι πίπτοντ’,
οὐδ’ ἀπαλλάσσει γενεὰν γένος, ἀλλ’ ἐρείπει
θεῶν τις, οὐδ’ ἔχει λύσιν.
Νῦν γὰρ ἐσχάτας ὅπερ
ῥίζας ἐτέτατο φάος ἐν Οἰδίπου δόμοις,

κατ᾽ αὖ νιν φοινία
θεῶν τῶν νερτέρων ἀμᾷ κόνις,
λόγου τ᾽ ἄνοια καὶ φρενῶν Ἐρινύς.
Τεάν, Ζεῦ, δύναμιν τίς ἀνδρῶν ὑπερβασία κατάσχοι, Str. 2 .
606 τὰν οὔθ᾽ ὕπνος αἱρεῖ ποθ᾽ ὁ πάντα κηλῶν,
οὔτε θεῶν ἄκμητοι
μῆνες, ἀγήρως δὲ χρόνῳ δυνάστας
κατέχεις Ὀλύμπου
610 μαρμαρόεσσαν αἴγλαν.
Τό τ᾽ ἔπειτα καὶ τὸ μέλλον
καὶ τὸ πρὶν ἐπαρκέσει
νόμος ὅδ᾽· οὐδὲν ἕρπει
θνατῶν βιότῳ πάμπολύ γ᾽ ἐκτὸς ἄτας.
615 Ἀ γὰρ δὴ πολύπλαγκτος ἐλπὶς πολλοῖς μὲν ὄνασις ἀνδρῶν, Ant. 2 .
πολλοῖς δ᾽ ἀπάτα κουφονόων ἐρώτων·
εἰδότι δ᾽ οὐδὲν ἕρπει,
πρὶν πυρὶ θερμῷ πόδα τις προσαύσῃ.
620 Σοφίᾳ γὰρ ἔκ του
κλεινὸν ἔπος πέφανται·
τὸ κακὸν δοκεῖν ποτ᾽ ἐσθλὸν
τῷδ᾽ ἔμμεν, ὅτῳ φρένας
θεὸς ἄγει πρὸς ἄταν·
625 πράσσει δ᾽ ὀλιγοστὸν χρόνον ἐκτὸς ἄτας.
Ὅδε μὴν Αἵμων, παίδων τῶν σῶν
νέατον γέννημ᾽· ἆρ᾽ ἀχνύμενος
[τῆς μελλογάμου νύμφης]
τάλιδος ἥκει μόρον Ἀντιγόνης,
630 ἀπάτας λεχέων ὑπεραλγῶν;

ΚΡ. Τάχ᾽ εἰσόμεσθα μάντεων ὑπέρτερον.
Ὦ παῖ, τελείαν ψῆφον ἆρα μὴ κλύων
τῆς μελλονύμφου πατρὶ λυσσαίνων πάρει;
ἢ σοὶ μὲν ἡμεῖς πανταχῇ δρῶντες φίλοι;

ΑΙΜΩΝ

Πάτερ, σός εἰμι, καὶ σύ μοι γνώμας ἔχων
χρηστὰς ἀπορθοῖς, αἷς ἔγωγ’ ἐφέψομαι.
Ἐμοὶ γὰρ οὐδεὶς ἀξιώσεται γάμος
μείζων φέρεσθαι σοῦ καλῶς ἡγουμένου.

ΚΡ. Οὕτω γάρ, ὦ παῖ, χρὴ διὰ στέρνων ἔχειν,
γνώμης πατρῴας πάντ’ ὄπισθεν ἑστάναι·
τούτου γὰρ οὕνεκ’ ἄνδρες εὔχονται γονὰς
κατηκόους φύσαντες ἐν δόμοις ἔχειν,
ὡς καὶ τὸν ἐχθρὸν ἀνταμύνωνται κακοῖς,
καὶ τὸν φίλον τιμῶσιν ἐξ ἴσου πατρί.
Ὅστις δ’ ἀνωφέλητα φιτύει τέκνα,
τί τόνδ’ ἂν εἴποις ἄλλο πλὴν αὑτῷ πόνους
φῦσαι, πολὺν δὲ τοῖσιν ἐχθροῖσιν γέλων;
Μή νύν ποτ’, ὦ παῖ, τὰς φρένας ‹γ’› ὑφ’ ἡδονῆς
γυναικὸς οὕνεκ’ ἐκβάλῃς, εἰδὼς ὅτι
ψυχρὸν παραγκάλισμα τοῦτο γίγνεται,
γυνὴ κακὴ ξύνευνος ἐν δόμοις; τί γὰρ
γένοιτ’ ἂν ἕλκος μεῖζον ἢ φίλος κακός;
Ἀλλὰ πτύσας ὡσεί τε δυσμενῆ μέθες
τὴν παῖδ’ ἐν Ἅιδου τήνδε νυμφεύειν τινί.
Ἐπεὶ γὰρ αὐτὴν εἷλον ἐμφανῶς ἐγὼ
πόλεως ἀπιστήσασαν ἐκ πάσης μόνην,
ψευδῆ γ’ ἐμαυτὸν οὐ καταστήσω πόλει,
ἀλλὰ κτενῶ. Πρὸς ταῦτ’ ἐφυμνείτω Δία
Ξύναιμον· εἰ γὰρ δὴ τά γ’ ἐγγενῆ φύσει
ἄκοσμα θρέψω, κάρτα τοὺς ἔξω γένους·
ἐν τοῖς γὰρ οἰκείοισιν ὅστις ἔστ’ ἀνὴρ
χρηστός, φανεῖται κἀν πόλει δίκαιος ὤν.
Ὅστις δ’ ὑπερβὰς ἢ νόμους βιάζεται,
ἢ τοὐπιτάσσειν τοῖς κρατοῦσιν ἐννοεῖ,
οὐκ ἔστ’ ἐπαίνου τοῦτον ἐξ ἐμοῦ τυχεῖν.
Ἀλλ’ ὃν πόλις στήσειε, τοῦδε χρὴ κλύειν
καὶ σμικρὰ καὶ δίκαια καὶ τἀναντία.

Καὶ τοῦτον ἂν τὸν ἄνδρα θαρσοίην ἐγὼ
καλῶς μὲν ἄρχειν, εὖ δ’ ἂν ἄρχεσθαι θέλειν,
670 δορός τ’ ἂν ἐν χειμῶνι προστεταγμένον
μένειν δίκαιον κἀγαθὸν παραστάτην.
Ἀναρχίας δὲ μεῖζον οὐκ ἔστιν κακόν·
αὕτη πόλεις ὄλλυσιν, ἥδ’ ἀναστάτους
οἴκους τίθησιν, ἥδε συμμάχου δορὸς
675 τροπὰς καταρρήγνυσι· τῶν δ’ ὀρθουμένων
σῴζει τὰ πολλὰ σώμαθ’ ἡ πειθαρχία.
Οὕτως ἀμυντέ’ ἐστὶ τοῖς κοσμουμένοις,
κοὔτοι γυναικὸς οὐδαμῶς ἡσσητέα·
κρεῖσσον γάρ, εἴπερ δεῖ, πρὸς ἀνδρὸς ἐκπεσεῖν,
680 κοὐκ ἂν γυναικῶν ἥσσονες καλοίμεθ’ ἄν.

ΧΟ. Ἡμῖν μέν, εἰ μὴ τῷ χρόνῳ κεκλέμμεθα,
λέγειν φρονούντως ὧν λέγεις δοκεῖς πέρι.

ΑΙ. Πάτερ, θεοὶ φύουσιν ἀνθρώποις φρένας
πάντων ὅσ’ ἐστὶ κτημάτων ὑπέρτατον·
685 Ἐγὼ δ’ ὅπως σὺ μὴ λέγεις ὀρθῶς τάδε,
οὔτ’ ἂν δυναίμην μήτ’ ἐπισταίμην λέγειν·
γένοιτο μεντἂν χἀτέρῳ καλῶς ἔχον.
Σοῦ δ’ οὖν πέφυκα πάντα προσκοπεῖν ὅσα
λέγει τις ἢ πράσσει τις ἢ ψέγειν ἔχει·
690 τὸ γὰρ σὸν ὄμμα δεινὸν ἀνδρὶ δημότῃ
λόγοις τοιούτοις οἷς σὺ μὴ τέρψῃ κλύων.
Ἐμοὶ δ’ ἀκούειν ἔσθ’ ὑπὸ σκότου τάδε,
τὴν παῖδα ταύτην οἷ’ ὀδύρεται πόλις,
πασῶν γυναικῶν ὡς ἀναξιωτάτη
695 κάκιστ’ ἀπ’ ἔργων εὐκλεεστάτων φθίνει,
ἥτις τὸν αὐτῆς αὐτάδελφον ἐν φοναῖς
πεπτῶτ’ ἄθαπτον μήθ’ ὑπ’ ὠμηστῶν κυνῶν
εἴασ’ ὀλέσθαι μήθ’ ὑπ’ οἰωνῶν τινος·
οὐχ ἥδε χρυσῆς ἀξία τιμῆς λαχεῖν;

τοιάδ’ ἐρεμνὴ σῖγ’ ἐπέρχεται φάτις.
Ἐμοὶ δὲ σοῦ πράσσοντος εὐτυχῶς, πάτερ,
οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν κτῆμα τιμιώτερον·
τί γὰρ πατρὸς θάλλοντος εὐκλείας τέκνοις
ἄγαλμα μεῖζον ἢ τί πρὸς παίδων πατρί;
Μή νυν ἓν ἦθος μοῦνον ἐν σαυτῷ φόρει,
ὡς φῂς σύ, κοὐδὲν ἄλλο, τοῦτ’ ὀρθῶς ἔχειν·
ὅστις γὰρ αὐτὸς ἢ φρονεῖν μόνος δοκεῖ,
ἢ γλῶσσαν ἣν οὐκ ἄλλος ἢ ψυχὴν ἔχειν,
οὗτοι διαπτυχθέντες ὤφθησαν κενοί.
Ἀλλ’ ἄνδρα, κεἴ τις ᾖ σοφός, τὸ μανθάνειν
πόλλ’ αἰσχρὸν οὐδὲν καὶ τὸ μὴ τείνειν ἄγαν.
Ὁρᾷς παρὰ ῥείθροισι χειμάρροις ὅσα
δένδρων ὑπείκει, κλῶνας ὡς ἐκσῴζεται,
τὰ δ’ ἀντιτείνοντ’ αὐτόπρεμν’ ἀπόλλυται.
Αὕτως δὲ ναὸς ὅστις ἐγκρατὴς πόδα
τείνας ὑπείκει μηδέν, ὑπτίοις κάτω
στρέψας τὸ λοιπὸν σέλμασιν ναυτίλλεται.
Ἀλλ’ εἶκε, θυμῷ καὶ μετάστασιν δίδου.
Γνώμη γὰρ εἴ τις κἀπ’ ἐμοῦ νεωτέρου
πρόσεστι, φήμ’ ἔγωγε πρεσβεύειν πολὺ
φῦναι τὸν ἄνδρα πάντ’ ἐπιστήμης πλέων·
εἰ δ’ οὖν, φιλεῖ γὰρ τοῦτο μὴ ταύτῃ ῥέπειν,
καὶ τῶν λεγόντων εὖ καλὸν τὸ μανθάνειν.

ΧΟ. Ἄναξ, σέ τ’ εἰκός, εἴ τι καίριον λέγει,
μαθεῖν, σέ τ’ αὖ τοῦδ’· εὖ γὰρ εἴρηται διπλᾶ.

ΚΡ. Οἱ τηλικοίδε καὶ διδαξόμεσθα δὴ
φρονεῖν ὑπ’ ἀνδρὸς τηλικοῦδε τὴν φύσιν;

ΑΙ. Μηδὲν τὸ μὴ δίκαιον· εἰ δ’ ἐγὼ νέος,

οὐ τὸν χρόνον χρὴ μᾶλλον ἢ τἄργα σκοπεῖν.
ΚΡ. Ἔργον γάρ ἐστι τοὺς ἀκοσμοῦντας σέβειν;

ΑΙ. Οὐδ’ ἂν κελεύσαιμ’ εὐσεβεῖν εἰς τοὺς κακούς.

ΚΡ. Οὐχ ἥδε γὰρ τοιᾶδ’ ἐπείληπται νόσῳ;

ΑΙ. Οὔ φησι Θήβης τῆσδ’ ὁμόπτολις λεώς.

ΚΡ. Πόλις γὰρ ἡμῖν ἀμὲ χρὴ τάσσειν ἐρεῖ;
ΑΙ. Ὁρᾷς τόδ’ ὡς εἴρηκας ὡς ἄγαν νέος;

ΚΡ. Ἄλλῳ γὰρ ἢ ‘μοὶ χρή με τῆσδ’ ἄρχειν χθονός;

ΑΙ. Πόλις γὰρ οὐκ ἔσθ’ ἥτις ἀνδρός ἐσθ’ ἑνός.

ΚΡ. Οὐ τοῦ κρατοῦντος ἡ πόλις νομίζεται;

ΑΙ. Καλῶς ἐρήμης γ’ ἂν σὺ γῆς ἄρχοις μόνος.
ΚΡ. Ὅδ’, ὡς ἔοικε, τῇ γυναικὶ συμμαχεῖ.

ΑΙ. Εἴπερ γυνὴ σύ· σοῦ γὰρ οὗν προκήδομαι.

ΚΡ. Ὦ παγκάκιστε, διὰ δίκης ἰὼν πατρί;

ΑΙ. Οὐ γὰρ δίκαιά σ’ ἐξαμαρτάνονθ’ ὁρῶ.

ΚΡ. Ἁμαρτάνω γὰρ τὰς ἐμὰς ἀρχὰς σέβων;
745 ΑΙ. Οὐ γὰρ σέβεις, τιμάς γε τὰς θεῶν πατῶν.

ΚΡ. Ὦ μιαρὸν ἦθος καὶ γυναικὸς ὕστερον.

ΑΙ. Οὔ τἂν ἔλοις ἥσσω γε τῶν αἰσχρῶν ἐμέ.

ΚΡ. Ὁ γοῦν λόγος σοι πᾶς ὑπὲρ κείνης ὅδε.

ΑΙ. Καὶ σοῦ γε κἀμοῦ, καὶ θεῶν τῶν νερτέρων.
750 ΚΡ. Ταύτην ποτ’ οὐκ ἔσθ’ ὡς ἔτι ζῶσαν γαμεῖς.

ΑΙ. Ἥδ’ οὖν θανεῖται καὶ θανοῦσ’ ὀλεῖ τινα.

ΚΡ. Ἦ κἀπαπειλῶν ὧδ’ ἐπεξέρχῃ θρασύς;

ΑΙ. Τίς δ’ ἔστ’ ἀπειλὴ πρὸς κενὰς γνώμας λέγειν;

ΚΡ. Κλαίων φρενώσεις, ὢν φρενῶν αὐτὸς κενός.
755 ΑΙ. Εἰ μὴ πατὴρ ἦσθ’, εἶπον ἄν σ’ οὐκ εὖ φρονεῖν.

ΚΡ. Γυναικὸς ὢν δούλευμα, μὴ κώτιλλέ με.

ΑΙ. Βούλει λέγειν τι καὶ λέγων μηδὲν κλύειν;

ΚΡ. Ἄληθες; ἀλλ’ οὐ τόνδ’ Ὄλυμπον, ἴσθ’ ὅτι,
χαίρων ἐπὶ ψόγοισι δεννάσεις ἐμέ.
760 Ἄγαγε τὸ μῖσος, ὡς κατ’ ὄμματ’ αὐτίκα
παρόντι θνῄσκῃ πλησία τῷ νυμφίῳ.

ΑΙ. Οὐ δῆτ’ ἔμοιγε, τοῦτο μὴ δόξῃς ποτέ,
οὔθ’ ἥδ’ ὀλεῖται πλησία, σύ τ’ οὐδαμᾷ
τοὐμὸν προσόψει κρᾶτ’ ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς ὁρῶν,
765 ὡς τοῖς θέλουσι τῶν φίλων μαίνῃ ξυνών.

ΧΟ. Ἀνὴρ, ἄναξ, βέβηκεν ἐξ ὀργῆς ταχύς·
νοῦς δ’ ἐστὶ τηλικοῦτος ἀλγήσας βαρύς.

ΚΡ. Δράτω, φρονείτω μεῖζον ἢ κατ’ ἄνδρ’ ἰών·
τὰ δ’ οὖν κόρα τάδ’ οὐκ ἀπαλλάξει μόρου.
ΧΟ. Ἄμφω γὰρ αὐτὰ καὶ κατακτεῖναι νοεῖς;

ΚΡ. Οὐ τήν γε μὴ θιγοῦσαν· εὖ γὰρ οὖν λέγεις.

ΧΟ. Μόρῳ δὲ ποίῳ καί σφε βουλεύῃ κτανεῖν;

ΚΡ. Ἄγων ἔρημος ἔνθ’ ἂν ᾖ βροτῶν στίβος,
κρύψω πετρώδει ζῶσαν ἐν κατώρυχι,
φορβῆς τοσοῦτον ὡς ἄγος μόνον προθείς,
ὅπως μίασμα πᾶσ’ ὑπεκφύγῃ πόλις·
κἀκεῖ τὸν Ἅιδην, ὃν μόνον σέβει θεῶν,
αἰτουμένη που τεύξεται τὸ μὴ θανεῖν,
ἢ γνώσεται γοῦν ἀλλὰ τηνικαῦθ’ ὅτι
πόνος περισσός ἐστι τἀν Ἅιδου σέβειν.

ΧΟ. Ἔρως ἀνίκατε μάχαν, Str.
Ἔρως, ὃς ἐν κτήμασι πίπτεις, ὃς ἐν μαλακαῖς παρειαῖς νεάνιδος ἐννυχεύεις,
φοιτᾷς δ’ ὑπερπόντιος ἔν τ’ ἀγρονόμοις αὐλαῖς·
καί σ’ οὔτ’ ἀθανάτων

φύξιμος οὐδεὶς οὔθ’ ἀμερίων ἐπ’ ἀνθρώπων, ὁ δ’ ἔχων μέμηνεν.
Σὺ καὶ δικαίων ἀδίκους Ant.
φρένας παρασπᾷς ἐπὶ λώβᾳ· σὺ καὶ τόδε νεῖκος ἀνδρῶν ξύναιμον ἔχεις ταράξας·
νικᾷ δ’ ἐναργὴς βλεφάρων ἵμερος εὐλέκτρου
νύμφας, τῶν μεγάλων
πάρεδρος ἐν ἀρχαῖς θεσμῶν· ἄμαχος γὰρ ἐμπαίζει θεὸς Ἀφροδίτα.
Νῦν δ’ ἤδη ‘γὼ καὐτὸς θεσμῶν
ἔξω φέρομαι τάδ’ ὁρῶν, ἴσχειν δ’
οὐκέτι πηγὰς δύναμαι δακρύων,
τὸν παγκοίτην ὅθ’ ὁρῶ θάλαμον
τήνδ’ Ἀντιγόνην ἀνύτουσαν.

ΑΝ. Ὁρᾶτ’ ἔμ’, ὦ γᾶς πατρίας πολῖται, Str. 1 .
τὰν νεάταν ὁδὸν
στείχουσαν, νέατον δὲ φέγγος λεύσσουσαν ἀελίου,
κοὔποτ’ αὖθις, ἀλλά μ’ ὁ παγκοίτας Ἅιδας ζῶσαν ἄγει
τὰν Ἀχέροντος
ἀκτάν, οὔθ’ ὑμεναίων ἔγκληρον, οὔτ’ ἐπὶ νυμφείοις
πώ μέ τις ὕμνος ὕμνησεν, ἀλλ’ Ἀχέροντι νυμφεύσω.

ΧΟ. Οὐκοῦν κλεινὴ καὶ ἔπαινον ἔχουσ’
ἐς τόδ’ ἀπέρχῃ κεῦθος νεκύων,
οὔτε φθινάσιν πληγεῖσα νόσοις
οὔτε ξιφέων ἐπίχειρα λαχοῦσ’,
ἀλλ’ αὐτόνομος ζῶσα μόνη δὴ
θνητῶν Ἅίδην καταβήσῃ.

ΑΝ. Ἤκουσα δὴ λυγροτάταν ὀλέσθαι Ant. 1 .
τὰν Φρυγίαν ξέναν
Ταντάλου Σιπύλῳ πρὸς ἄκρῳ, τὰν κισσὸς ὡς ἀτενὴς
πετραία βλάστα δάμασεν, καί νιν ὄμβρῳ τακομέναν,

ὡς φάτις ἀνδρῶν,
830 χιών τ’ οὐδαμὰ λείπει, τέγγει θ’ ὑπ’ ὀφρύσι παγκλαύτοις
δειράδας· ᾇ με δαίμων ὁμοιοτάταν κατευνάζει.

ΧΟ. Ἀλλὰ θεός τοι καὶ θεογεννής,
835 ἡμεῖς δὲ βροτοὶ καὶ θνητογενεῖς.
Καίτοι φθιμένῃ μέγ‹α κ›ἀκοῦσαι
τοῖς ἰσοθέοις σύγκληρα λαχεῖν
ζῶσαν καὶ ἔπειτα θανοῦσαν.

ΑΝ. Οἴμοι γελῶμαι. Τί με, πρὸς θεῶν πατρῴων, οὐκ οὐλομέναν ὑβρίζεις,
Str. 2 .
841 ἀλλ’ ἐπίφαντον;
Ὦ πόλις, ὦ πόλεως
πολυκτήμονες ἄνδρες·
ἰὼ Διρκαῖαι κρῆναι Θήβας τ’ εὐαρμάτου ἄλσος, ἔμπας
846 ξυμμάρτυρας ὔμμ’ ἐπικτῶμαι,
οἷα φίλων ἄκλαυτος, οἵοις νόμοις
πρὸς ἔργμα τυμβόχωστον ἔρχομαι τάφου ποταινίου·
850 ἰὼ δύστανος,
οὔτ’ ἐν βροτοῖς οὔτε νεκροῖσιν
μέτοικος, οὐ ζῶσιν, οὐ θανοῦσιν.

ΧΟ. Προβᾶσ’ ἐπ’ ἔσχατον θράσους
ὑψηλὸν ἐς Δίκας βάθρον
855 προσέπεσες, ὦ τέκνον, πολύ·
πατρῷον δ’ ἐκτίνεις τιν’ ἄθλον.

ΑΝ. Ἔψαυσας ἀλγεινοτάτας ἐμοὶ μερίμνας πατρὸς τριπόλιστον οἶκτον,

Ant. 2 .

τοῦ τε πρόπαντος
ἀμετέρου πότμου
κλεινοῖς Λαβδακίδαισιν.
Ἰὼ ματρῷαι λέκτρων ἄται κοιμήματ‹ά τ’› αὐτογέννητ’
ἐμῷ πατρὶ δυσμόρου ματρός,
οἵων ἐγώ ποθ’ ἁ ταλαίφρων ἔφυν·
πρὸς οὓς ἀραῖος, ἄγαμος, ἆδ’ ἐγὼ μέτοικος ἔρχομαι.
Ἰὼ δυσπότμων
γάμων, κασίγνητε, κυρήσας,
θανὼν ἔτ’ οὖσαν κατήναρές με.

ΧΟ. Σέβειν μὲν εὐσέβειά τις,
κράτος δ’ ὅτῳ κράτος μέλει
παραβατὸν οὐδαμᾷ πέλει,
σὲ δ’ αὐτόγνωτος ὤλεσ’ ὀργά.

ΑΝ. Ἄκλαυτος, ἄφιλος, ἀνυμέναιος ταλαίφρων ἄγομαι τάνδ’ ἑτοίμαν ὁδόν·
Ep.
οὐκέτι μοι τόδε λαμπάδος ἱερὸν ὄμμα
θέμις ὁρᾶν ταλαίνᾳ·
τὸν δ’ ἐμὸν πότμον ἀδάκρυτον οὐδεὶς φίλων στενάζει.

ΚΡ. Ἆρ’ ἴστ’ ἀοιδὰς καὶ γόους πρὸ τοῦ θανεῖν
ὡς οὐδ’ ἂν εἷς παύσαιτ’ ἄν, εἰ χρείη λέγειν;
Οὐκ ἄξεθ’ ὡς τάχιστα, καὶ κατηρεφεῖ
τύμβῳ περιπτύξαντες, ὡς εἴρηκ’ ἐγώ,
ἄφετε μόνην ἔρημον, εἴτε χρῇ θανεῖν,
εἴτ’ ἐν τοιαύτῃ ζῶσα τυμβεύειν στέγῃ.
Ἡμεῖς γὰρ ἁγνοὶ τοὐπὶ τήνδε τὴν κόρην·
μετοικίας δ’ οὖν τῆς ἄνω στερήσεται.

ΑΝ. Ὦ τύμβος, ὦ νυμφεῖον, ὦ κατασκαφὴς
οἴκησις αἰείφρουρος, οἵ πορεύομαι
πρὸς τοὺς ἐμαυτῆς, ὧν ἀριθμὸν ἐν νεκροῖς
πλεῖστον δέδεκται Φερσέφασσ’ ὀλωλότων,
895 ὧν λοισθία ‘γὼ καὶ κάκιστα δὴ μακρῷ
κάτειμι, πρίν μοι μοῖραν ἐξήκειν βίου.
Ἐλθοῦσα μέντοι κάρτ’ ἐν ἐλπίσιν τρέφω
φίλη μὲν ἥξειν πατρί, προσφιλὴς δὲ σοί,
μῆτερ, φίλη δὲ σοί, κασίγνητον κάρα·
900 ἐπεὶ θανόντας αὐτόχειρ ὑμᾶς ἐγὼ
ἔλουσα κἀκόσμησα κἀπιτυμβίους
χοὰς ἔδωκα· νῦν δέ, Πολύνεικες, τὸ σὸν
δέμας περιστέλλουσα τοιάδ’ ἄρνυμαι.
Καίτοι σ’ ἐγὼ ‘τίμησα τοῖς φρονοῦσιν εὖ.
905 Οὐ γάρ ποτ’ οὔτ’ ἂν εἰ τέκνων μήτηρ ἔφυν
οὔτ’ εἰ πόσις μοι κατθανὼν ἐτήκετο,
βίᾳ πολιτῶν τόνδ’ ἂν ᾑρόμην πόνον.
Τίνος νόμου δὴ ταῦτα πρὸς χάριν λέγω;
πόσις μὲν ἄν μοι κατθανόντος ἄλλος ἦν,
910 καὶ παῖς ἀπ’ ἄλλου φωτός, εἰ τοῦδ’ ἥμπλακον·
μητρὸς δ’ ἐν Ἅιδου καὶ πατρὸς κεκευθότοιν
οὐκ ἔστ’ ἀδελφὸς ὅστις ἂν βλάστοι ποτέ.
Τοιῷδε μέντοι σ’ ἐκπροτιμήσασ’ ἐγὼ
νόμῳ, Κρέοντι ταῦτ’ ἔδοξ’ ἁμαρτάνειν
915 καὶ δεινὰ τολμᾶν, ὦ κασίγνητον κάρα.
Καὶ νῦν ἄγει με διὰ χερῶν οὕτω λαβὼν
ἄλεκτρον, ἀνυμέναιον, οὔτε του γάμου
μέρος λαχοῦσαν οὔτε παιδείου τροφῆς,
ἀλλ’ ὧδ’ ἔρημος πρὸς φίλων ἡ δύσμορος
920 ζῶσ’ εἰς θανόντων ἔρχομαι κατασκαφάς,
ποίαν παρεξελθοῦσα δαιμόνων δίκην;
Τί χρή με τὴν δύστηνον ἐς θεοὺς ἔτι
βλέπειν; τίν’ αὐδᾶν ξυμμάχων; ἐπεί γε δὴ
τὴν δυσσέβειαν εὐσεβοῦσ’ ἐκτησάμην.
925 Ἀλλ’ εἰ μὲν οὖν τάδ’ ἐστὶν ἐν θεοῖς καλά,
παθόντες ἂν ξυγγνοῖμεν ἡμαρτηκότες·

εἰ δ’ οἵδ’ ἁμαρτάνουσι, μὴ πλείω κακὰ
πάθοιεν ἢ καὶ δρῶσιν ἐκδίκως ἐμέ.

ΧΟ. Ἔτι τῶν αὐτῶν ἀνέμων αὐταὶ
ψυχῆς ῥιπαὶ τήνδε γ’ ἔχουσιν.

ΚΡ. Τοιγὰρ τούτων τοῖσιν ἄγουσιν
κλαύμαθ’ ὑπάρξει βραδυτῆτος ὕπερ.

ΑΝ. Οἴμοι, θανάτου τοῦτ’ ἐγγυτάτω
τοὔπος ἀφῖκται.
ΚΡ. Θαρσεῖν οὐδὲν παραμυθοῦμαι
μὴ οὐ τάδε ταύτῃ κατακυροῦσθαι.

ΑΝ. Ὦ γῆς Θήβης ἄστυ πατρῷον
καὶ θεοὶ προγενεῖς,
ἄγομαι δὴ ‘γὼ κοὐκέτι μέλλω.
Λεύσσετε, Θήβης οἱ κοιρανίδαι,
τὴν βασιλειδῶν μούνην λοιπήν,
οἷα πρὸς οἵων ἀνδρῶν πάσχω,
τὴν εὐσεβίαν σεβίσασα.

ΧΟ. Ἔτλα καὶ Δανάας οὐράνιον φῶς Str. 1 .
ἀλλάξαι δέμας ἐν χαλκοδέτοις αὐλαῖς·
κρυπτομένα δ’ ἐν τυμβήρει θαλάμῳ κατεζεύχθη·
καίτοι ‹καὶ› γενεᾷ τίμιος, ὦ παῖ, παῖ,
καὶ Ζηνὸς ταμιεύεσκε γονὰς χρυσορύτους.

Ἀλλ’ ἀ μοιριδία τις δύνασις δεινά·
οὔτ’ ἄν νιν ὄλβος οὔτ’ Ἄρης,
οὐ πύργος, οὐχ ἁλίκτυποι
κελαιναὶ νᾶες ἐκφύγοιεν.
Ζεύχθη δ’ ὀξύχολος παῖς ὁ Δρύαντος, Ant. 1 .
Ἠδωνῶν βασιλεύς, κερτομίοις ὀργαῖς,
ἐκ Διονύσου πετρώδει κατάφαρκτος ἐν δεσμῷ.
Οὕτω τᾶς μανίας δεινὸν ἀποστάζει
ἀνθηρόν τε μένος. Κεῖνος ἐπέγνω μανίαις
ψαύων τὸν θεὸν ἐν κερτομίοις γλώσσαις.
Παύεσκε μὲν γὰρ ἐνθέους
γυναῖκας εὔιόν τε πῦρ,
φιλαύλους τ’ ἠρέθιζε Μούσας.
Παρὰ δὲ Κυανέων πελάγει διδύμας ἁλὸς Str. 2 .
ἀκταὶ Βοσπόριαι ἰδ’ ὁ Θρῃκῶν ‹ἠϊὼν›
Σαλμυδησσός, ἵν’ ἀγχίπολις Ἄρης
δισσοῖσι Φινείδαις
εἶδεν ἀρατὸν ἔλκος
τυφλωθὲν ἐξ ἀγρίας δάμαρτος
ἀλαὸν ἀλαστόροισιν ὀμμάτων κύκλοις
ἄτερθ’ ἐγχέων, ὑφ’ αἱματηραῖς
χείρεσσι καὶ κερκίδων ἀκμαῖσιν.
Κατὰ δὲ τακόμενοι μέλεοι μελέαν πάθαν Ant. 2 .
κλαῖον, ματρὸς ἔχοντες ἀνύμφευτον γονάν·
ἃ δὲ σπέρμα μὲν ἀρχαιογόνων
ἄντασ’ Ἐρεχθειδᾶν,
τηλεπόροις δ’ ἐν ἄντροις
τράφη θυέλλῃσιν ἐν πατρῴαις
Βορεὰς ἄμιππος ὀρθόποδος ὑπὲρ πάγου
θεῶν παῖς· ἀλλὰ κἀπ’ ἐκείνᾳ
Μοῖραι μακραίωνες ἔσχον, ὦ παῖ.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
Θήβης ἄνακτες, ἥκομεν κοινὴν ὁδὸν
δύ’ ἐξ ἑνὸς βλέποντε· τοῖς τυφλοῖσι γὰρ
αὕτη κέλευθος ἐκ προηγητοῦ πέλει.

ΚΡ. Τί δ’ ἔστιν, ὦ γεραιὲ Τειρεσία, νέον;

ΤΕ. Ἐγὼ διδάξω, καὶ σὺ τῷ μάντει πιθοῦ.

ΚΡ. Οὔκουν πάρος γε σῆς ἀπεστάτουν φρενός.

ΤΕ. Τοιγὰρ δι’ ὀρθῆς τήνδ’ ἐναυκλήρεις πόλιν.
995 ΚΡ. Ἔχω πεπονθὼς μαρτυρεῖν ὀνήσιμα.

ΤΕ. Φρόνει βεβὼς αὖ νῦν ἐπὶ ξυροῦ τύχης.

ΚΡ. Τί δ’ ἔστιν; ὡς ἐγὼ τὸ σὸν φρίσσω στόμα.

ΤΕ. Γνώσῃ, τέχνης σημεῖα τῆς ἐμῆς κλύων.
Εἰς γὰρ παλαιὸν θᾶκον ὀρνιθοσκόπον
1000 ἵζων, ἵν’ ἦν μοι παντὸς οἰωνοῦ λιμήν,
ἀγνῶτ’ ἀκούω φθόγγον ὀρνίθων, κακῷ
κλάζοντας οἴστρῳ καὶ βεβαρβαρωμένῳ·
καὶ σπῶντας ἐν χηλαῖσιν ἀλλήλους φοναῖς
ἔγνων· πτερῶν γὰρ ῥοῖβδος οὐκ ἄσημος ἦν.
1005 Εὐθὺς δὲ δείσας ἐμπύρων ἐγευόμην
βωμοῖσι παμφλέκτοισιν· ἐκ δὲ θυμάτων

Ἥφαιστος οὐκ ἔλαμπεν, ἀλλ’ ἐπὶ σποδῷ
μυδῶσα κηκὶς μηρίων ἐτήκετο
κἄτυφε κἀνέπτυε, καὶ μετάρσιοι
χολαὶ διεσπείροντο, καὶ καταρρυεῖς
μηροὶ καλυπτῆς ἐξέκειντο πιμελῆς.
Τοιαῦτα παιδὸς τοῦδ’ ἐμάνθανον πάρα,
φθίνοντ’ ἀσήμων ὀργίων μαντεύματα·
ἐμοὶ γὰρ οὗτος ἡγεμών, ἄλλοις δ’ ἐγώ.
Καὶ ταῦτα τῆς σῆς ἐκ φρενὸς νοσεῖ πόλις·
βωμοὶ γὰρ ἡμῖν ἐσχάραι τε παντελεῖς
πλήρεις ὑπ’ οἰωνῶν τε καὶ κυνῶν βορᾶς
τοῦ δυσμόρου πεπτῶτος Οἰδίπου γόνου.
Κᾆτ’ οὐ δέχονται θυστάδας λιτὰς ἔτι
θεοὶ παρ’ ἡμῶν οὐδὲ μηρίων φλόγα,
οὐδ’ ὄρνις εὐσήμους ἀπορροιβδεῖ βοάς,
ἀνδροφθόρου βεβρῶτες αἵματος λίπος.
Ταῦτ’ οὖν, τέκνον, φρόνησον. Ἀνθρώποισι γὰρ
τοῖς πᾶσι κοινόν ἐστι τοὐξαμαρτάνειν·
ἐπεὶ δ’ ἁμάρτῃ, κεῖνος οὐκέτ’ ἔστ’ ἀνὴρ
ἄβουλος οὐδ’ ἄνολβος, ὅστις ἐς κακὸν
πεσὼν ἀκῆται μηδ’ ἀκίνητος πέλῃ·
αὐθαδία τοι σκαιότητ’ ὀφλισκάνει.
Ἀλλ’ εἶκε τῷ θανόντι, μηδ’ ὀλωλότα
κέντει· τίς ἀλκὴ τὸν θανόντ’ ἐπικτανεῖν;
Εὖ σοι φρονήσας εὖ λέγω· τὸ μανθάνειν δ’
ἥδιστον εὖ λέγοντος, εἰ κέρδος λέγοι.

ΚΡ. Ὦ πρέσβυ, πάντες ὥστε τοξόται σκοποῦ
τοξεύετ’ ἀνδρὸς τοῦδε, κοὐδὲ μαντικῆς
ἄπρακτος ὑμῖν εἰμι, τῶν δ’ ὑπαὶ γένους
ἐξημπόλημαι κἀμπεφόρτισμαι πάλαι.
Κερδαίνετ’, ἐμπολᾶτε τὸν πρὸς Σάρδεων
ἤλεκτρον, εἰ βούλεσθε, καὶ τὸν Ἰνδικὸν
χρυσόν· τάφῳ δ’ ἐκεῖνον οὐχὶ κρύψετε·
οὐδ’ εἰ θέλουσ’ οἱ Ζηνὸς αἰετοὶ βορὰν
φέρειν νιν ἁρπάζοντες ἐς Διὸς θρόνους,

οὐδ’ ὡς μίασμα τοῦτο μὴ τρέσας, ἐγὼ
θάπτειν παρήσω κεῖνον· εὖ γὰρ οἶδ’ ὅτι
θεοὺς μιαίνειν οὔτις ἀνθρώπων σθένει.
1045 Πίπτουσι δ’, ὦ γεραιὲ Τειρεσία, βροτῶν
χοὶ πολλὰ δεινοὶ πτώματ’ αἴσχρ’, ὅταν λόγους
αἰσχροὺς καλῶς λέγωσι τοῦ κέρδους χάριν.

ΤΕ. Φεῦ·
ἆρ’ οἶδεν ἀνθρώπων τις, ἆρα φράζεται -

ΚΡ. Τί χρῆμα; ποῖον τοῦτο πάγκοινον λέγεις;
1050 ΤΕ. ὅσῳ κράτιστον κτημάτων εὐβουλία;

ΚΡ. Ὅσῳπερ, οἶμαι, μὴ φρονεῖν πλείστη βλάβη.

ΤΕ. Ταύτης σὺ μέντοι τῆς νόσου πλήρης ἔφυς.

ΚΡ. Οὐ βούλομαι τὸν μάντιν ἀντειπεῖν κακῶς.

ΤΕ. Καὶ μὴν λέγεις, ψευδῆ με θεσπίζειν λέγων.
1055 ΚΡ. Τὸ μαντικὸν γὰρ πᾶν φιλάργυρον γένος.

ΤΕ. Τὸ δ’ ἐκ τυράννων αἰσχροκερδείαν φιλεῖ.

ΚΡ. Ἆρ’ οἶσθα ταγοὺς ὄντας ἂν λέγῃς λέγων;

ΤΕ. Οἶδ’· ἐξ ἐμοῦ γὰρ τήνδ’ ἔχεις σώσας πόλιν.

ΚΡ. Σοφὸς σὺ μάντις, ἀλλὰ τἀδικεῖν φιλῶν.
1060 ΤΕ. Ὄρσεις με τἀκίνητα διὰ φρενῶν φράσαι.

ΚΡ. Κίνει, μόνον δὲ μὴ ‘πὶ κέρδεσιν λέγων.

ΤΕ. Οὕτω γὰρ ἥδη καὶ δοκῶ τὸ σὸν μέρος.

ΚΡ. Ὡς μὴ ‘μπολήσων ἴσθι τὴν ἐμὴν φρένα.

ΤΕ. Ἀλλ’ εὖ γέ τοι κάτισθι μὴ πολλοὺς ἔτι
1065 τρόχους ἁμιλλητῆρας ἡλίου τελῶν,
ἐν οἷσι τῶν σῶν αὐτὸς ἐκ σπλάγχνων ἕνα
νέκυν νεκρῶν ἀμοιβὸν ἀντιδοὺς ἕσῃ,
ἀνθ’ ὧν ἔχεις μὲν τῶν ἄνω βαλὼν κάτω,
ψυχήν τ’ ἀτίμως ἐν τάφῳ κατῴκισας,
1070 ἔχεις δὲ τῶν κάτωθεν ἐνθάδ’ αὖ θεῶν
ἄμοιρον, ἀκτέριστον, ἀνόσιον νέκυν.
Ὧν οὔτε σοὶ μέτεστιν οὔτε τοῖς ἄνω

θεοῖσιν, ἀλλ’ ἐκ σοῦ βιάζονται τάδε.
Τούτων σε λωβητῆρες ὑστεροφθόροι
1075 λοχῶσιν Ἅιδου καὶ θεῶν Ἐρινύες,
ἐν τοῖσιν αὐτοῖς τοῖσδε ληφθῆναι κακοῖς.
Καὶ ταῦτ’ ἄθρησον εἰ κατηργυρωμένος
λέγω· φανεῖ γὰρ οὐ μακροῦ χρόνου τριβὴ
ἀνδρῶν γυναικῶν σοῖς δόμοις κωκύματα.
1080 Ἔχθρᾳ δὲ πᾶσαι συνταράσσονται πόλεις,
ὅσων σπαράγματ’ ἢ κύνες καθήγνισαν,
ἢ θῆρες, ἤ τις πτηνὸς οἰωνὸς φέρων
ἀνόσιον ὀσμὴν ἐστιοῦχον ἐς πόλιν.
Τοιαῦτά σου, λυπεῖς γάρ, ὥστε τοξότης
1085 ἀφῆκα θυμῷ καρδίας τοξεύματα
βέβαια, τῶν σὺ θάλπος οὐχ ὑπεκδραμῇ.
Ὦ παῖ, σὺ δ’ ἡμᾶς ἄπαγε πρὸς δόμους, ἵνα
τὸν θυμὸν οὗτος ἐς νεωτέρους ἀφῇ,
καὶ γνῷ τρέφειν τὴν γλῶσσαν ἡσυχωτέραν
1090 τὸν νοῦν τ’ ἀμείνω τῶν φρενῶν ἢ νῦν φέρει.

ΧΟ. Ἀνήρ, ἄναξ, βέβηκε δεινὰ θεσπίσας·
ἐπιστάμεσθα δ’, ἐξ ὅτου λευκὴν ἐγὼ
τήνδ’ ἐκ μελαίνης ἀμφιβάλλομαι τρίχα,
μή πώ ποτ’ αὐτὸν ψεῦδος ἐς πόλιν λακεῖν.
1095 ΚΡ. Ἔγνωκα καὐτὸς καὶ ταράσσομαι φρένας·
τό τ’ εἰκαθεῖν γὰρ δεινόν, ἀντιστάντα δὲ
ἄτῃ πατάξαι θυμὸν ἐν δεινῷ πάρα.

ΧΟ. Εὐβουλίας δεῖ, παῖ Μενοικέως Κρέον.

ΚΡ. Τί δῆτα χρὴ δρᾶν; φράζε· πείσομαι δ’ ἐγώ.
1100 ΧΟ. Ἐλθὼν κόρην μὲν ἐκ κατώρυχος στέγης
ἄνες, κτίσον δὲ τῷ προκειμένῳ τάφον.

ΚΡ. Καὶ ταῦτ’ ἐπαινεῖς καὶ δοκεῖς παρεικαθεῖν;

ΧΟ. Ὅσον γ’, ἄναξ, τάχιστα· συντέμνουσι γὰρ
θεῶν ποδώκεις τοὺς κακόφρονας βλάβαι.
ΚΡ. Οἴμοι· μόλις μέν, καρδίας δ’ ἐξίσταμαι
τὸ δρᾶν· ἀνάγκῃ δ’ οὐχὶ δυσμαχητέον.

ΧΟ. Δρᾶ νυν τάδ’ ἐλθὼν μηδ’ ἐπ’ ἄλλοισιν τρέπε.

ΚΡ. Ὧδ’ ὡς ἔχω στείχοιμ’ ἄν· ἴτ’, ἴτ’, ὀπάονες
οἵ τ’ ὄντες οἵ τ’ ἀπόντες, ἀξίνας χεροῖν
ὁρμᾶσθ’ ἐλόντες εἰς ἐπόψιον τόπον.
Ἐγὼ δ’, ἐπειδὴ δόξα τῇδ’ ἐπεστράφη,
αὐτός τ’ ἔδησα καὶ παρὼν ἐκλύσομαι·
δέδοικα γὰρ μὴ τοὺς καθεστῶτας νόμους
ἄριστον ᾖ σῴζοντα τὸν βίον τελεῖν.
ΧΟ. Πολυώνυμε, Καδμείας νύμφας ἄγαλμα Str. 1 .
καὶ Διὸς βαρυβρεμέτα
γένος, κλυτὰν ὃς ἀμφέπεις
Ἰταλίαν, μέδεις δὲ
παγκοίνοις Ἐλευσινίας
Δηοῦς ἐν κόλποις, ὦ Βακχεῦ, Βακχᾶν ματρόπολιν Θήβαν
ναιετῶν παρ’ ὑγρόν ‹τ’›
Ἰσμηνοῦ ῥέεθρον, ἀγρίου τ’ ἐπὶ σπορᾷ δράκοντος·
σὲ δ’ ὑπὲρ διλόφου πέτρας στέροψ ὄπωπε Ant. 1 .
λιγνύς, ἔνθα Κωρύκιαι
νύμφαι στίχουσι Βακχίδες
Κασταλίας τε νᾶμα.
Καί σε Νυσαίων ὀρέων

κισσήρεις ὄχθαι χλωρά τ’ ἀκτὰ πολυστάφυλος πέμπει,
ἀμβρότων ἐπέων
εὐαζόντων, Θηβαΐας ἐπισκοποῦντ’ ἀγυιάς·
τὰν ἐκ πασᾶν τιμᾶς Str. 2 .
ὑπερτάταν πόλεων
ματρὶ σὺν κεραυνίᾳ·
καὶ νῦν, ὡς βιαίας ἔχεται
πάνδαμος πόλις ἐπὶ νόσου,
μολεῖν καθαρσίῳ ποδὶ Παρνασίαν
ὑπὲρ κλιτύν, ἢ στονόεντα πορθμόν.
Ἰὼ πῦρ πνεόντων Ant. 2 .
χοράγ’ ἄστρων, νυχίων
φθεγμάτων ἐπίσκοπε,
παῖ, Δῖον γένεθλον, προφάνηθ’,
ὦναξ, σαῖς ἅμα περιπόλοις
Θυίαισιν, αἵ σε μαινόμεναι πάννυχοι
χορεύουσι τὸν ταμίαν Ἴακχον.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
Κάδμου πάροικοι καὶ δόμων Ἀμφίονος,
οὐκ ἔσθ’ ὁποῖον στάντ’ ἂν ἀνθρώπου βίον
οὔτ’ αἰνέσαιμ’ ἂν οὔτε μεμψαίμην ποτέ·
τύχη γὰρ ὀρθοῖ καὶ τύχη καταρρέπει
τὸν εὐτυχοῦντα τόν τε δυστυχοῦντ’ ἀεί,
καὶ μάντις οὐδεὶς τῶν καθεστώτων βροτοῖς.
Κρέων γὰρ ἦν ζηλωτός, ὡς ἐμοί, ποτέ,
σώσας μὲν ἐχθρῶν τήνδε Καδμείαν χθόνα,
λαβών τε χώρας παντελῆ μοναρχίαν
εὔθυνε, θάλλων εὐγενεῖ τέκνων σπορᾷ·
καὶ νῦν ἀφεῖται πάντα. Τὰς γὰρ ἡδονὰς
ὅταν προδῶσιν ἄνδρες, οὐ τίθημ’ ἐγὼ
ζῆν τοῦτον, ἀλλ’ ἔμψυχον ἡγοῦμαι νεκρόν.
Πλούτει τε γὰρ κατ’ οἶκον, εἰ βούλει, μέγα,
καὶ ζῇ τύραννον σχῆμ’ ἔχων· ἐὰν δ’ ἀπῇ
τούτων τὸ χαίρειν, τἄλλ’ ἐγὼ καπνοῦ σκιᾶς
οὐκ ἂν πριαίμην ἀνδρὶ πρὸς τὴν ἡδονήν.

ΧΟ. Τί δ’ αὖ τόδ’ ἄχθος βασιλέων ἥκεις φέρων;

ΑΓ. Τεθνᾶσιν· οἱ δὲ ζῶντες αἴτιοι θανεῖν.

ΧΟ. Καὶ τίς φονεύει; τίς δ’ ὁ κείμενος; λέγε.
1175 ΑΓ. Αἵμων ὄλωλεν· αὐτόχειρ δ’ αἱμάσσεται.

ΧΟ. Πότερα πατρῴας ἢ πρὸς οἰκείας χερός;

ΑΓ. Αὐτὸς πρὸς αὐτοῦ, πατρὶ μηνίσας φόνου.

ΧΟ. Ὦ μάντι, τοὔπος ὡς ἄρ’ ὀρθὸν ἤνυσας.

ΑΓ. Ὡς ὦδ’ ἐχόντων τἄλλα βουλεύειν πάρα.
1180 ΧΟ. Καὶ μὴν ὁρῶ τάλαιναν Εὐρυδίκην ὁμοῦ
δάμαρτα τὴν Κρέοντος· ἐκ δὲ δωμάτων
ἤτοι κλύουσα παιδὸς ἢ τύχῃ πάρα.

ΕΥΡΥΔΙΚΗ
Ὦ πάντες ἀστοί, τῶν λόγων ἐπῃσθόμην

πρὸς ἔξοδον στείχουσα, Παλλάδος θεᾶς
ὅπως ἱκοίμην εὐγμάτων προσήγορος.
Καὶ τυγχάνω τε κλῇθρ᾽ ἀνασπαστοῦ πύλης
χαλῶσα, καί με φθόγγος οἰκείου κακοῦ
βάλλει δι᾽ ὤτων, ὑπτία δὲ κλίνομαι
δείσασα πρὸς δμωαῖσι κἀποπλήσσομαι.
Ἀλλ᾽ ὅστις ἦν ὁ μῦθος αὖθις εἴπατε·
κακῶν γὰρ οὐκ ἄπειρος οὖσ᾽ ἀκούσομαι.

ΑΓ. Ἐγώ, φίλη δέσποινα, καὶ παρὼν ἐρῶ
κοὐδὲν παρήσω τῆς ἀληθείας ἔπος·
τί γάρ σε μαλθάσσοιμ᾽ ἂν ὢν ἐς ὕστερον
ψεῦσται φανούμεθ᾽; ὀρθὸν ἀλήθει᾽ ἀεί.
Ἐγὼ δὲ σῷ ποδαγὸς ἐσπόμην πόσει
πεδίον ἐπ᾽ ἄκρον, ἔνθ᾽ ἔκειτο νηλεὲς
κυνοσπάρακτον σῶμα Πολυνείκους ἔτι·
καὶ τὸν μέν, αἰτήσαντες ἐνοδίαν θεὸν
Πλούτωνά τ᾽ ὀργὰς εὐμενεῖς κατασχεθεῖν,
λούσαντες ἁγνὸν λουτρόν, ἐν νεοσπάσιν
θαλλοῖς ὃ δὴ λέλειπτο συγκατῄθομεν,
καὶ τύμβον ὀρθόκρανον οἰκείας χθονὸς
χώσαντες, αὖθις πρὸς λιθόστρωτον κόρης
νυμφεῖον Ἅιδου κοῖλον εἰσεβαίνομεν.
Φωνῆς δ᾽ ἄπωθεν ὀρθίων κωκυμάτων
κλύει τις ἀκτέριστον ἀμφὶ παστάδα,
καὶ δεσπότῃ Κρέοντι σημαίνει μολών·
τῷ δ᾽ ἀθλίας ἄσημα περιβαίνει βοῆς
ἔρποντι μᾶλλον ἆσσον, οἰμώξας δ᾽ ἔπος
ἴησι δυσθρήνητον· “Ὦ τάλας ἐγώ,
ἆρ᾽ εἰμὶ μάντις; ἆρα δυστυχεστάτην
κέλευθον ἕρπω τῶν παρελθουσῶν ὁδῶν;
παιδός με σαίνει φθόγγος. Ἀλλά, πρόσπολοι,
ἴτ᾽ ἆσσον ὠκεῖς, καὶ παραστάντες τάφῳ
ἀθρήσαθ᾽, ἁρμὸν χώματος λιθοσπαδῆ
δύντες πρὸς αὐτὸ στόμιον, εἰ τὸν Αἵμονος
φθόγγον συνίημ᾽, ἢ θεοῖσι κλέπτομαι.”

Τάδ’ ἐξ ἀθύμου δεσπότου κελεύσμασιν
ἠθροῦμεν· ἐν δὲ λοισθίῳ τυμβεύματι
τὴν μὲν κρεμαστὴν αὐχένος κατείδομεν,
βρόχῳ μιτώδει σινδόνος καθημμένην,
τὸν δ’ ἀμφὶ μέσσῃ περιπετῆ προσκείμενον,
εὐνῆς ἀποιμώζοντα τῆς κάτω φθορὰν
καὶ πατρὸς ἔργα καὶ τὸ δύστηνον λέχος.
Ὁ δ’ ὡς ὁρᾷ σφε, στυγνὸν οἰμώξας ἔσω
χωρεῖ πρὸς αὐτὸν κἀνακωκύσας καλεῖ·
“Ὦ τλῆμον, οἷον ἔργον εἴργασαι· τίνα
νοῦν ἔσχες; ἐν τῷ συμφορᾶς διεφθάρης;
Ἔξελθε, τέκνον, ἱκέσιός σε λίσσομαι.”
Τὸν δ’ ἀγρίοις ὄσσοισι παπτήνας ὁ παῖς,
πτύσας προσώπῳ κοὐδὲν ἀντειπών, ξίφους
ἔλκει διπλοῦς κνώδοντας, ἐκ δ’ ὁρμωμένου
πατρὸς φυγαῖσιν ἤμπλακ’· εἶθ’ ὁ δύσμορος
αὐτῷ χολωθείς, ὥσπερ εἶχ’, ἐπενταθεὶς
ἤρεισε πλευραῖς μέσσον ἔγχος, ἐς δ’ ὑγρὸν
ἀγκῶν’ ἔτ’ ἔμφρων παρθένῳ προσπτύσσεται·
καὶ φυσιῶν ὀξεῖαν ἐκβάλλει ῥοὴν
λευκῇ παρειᾷ φοινίου σταλάγματος.
Κεῖται δὲ νεκρὸς περὶ νεκρῷ, τὰ νυμφικὰ
τέλη λαχὼν δείλαιος εἰν Ἅιδου δόμοις,
δείξας ἐν ἀνθρώποισι τὴν ἀβουλίαν
ὅσῳ μέγιστον ἀνδρὶ πρόσκειται κακόν.

ΧΟ. Τί τοῦτ’ ἂν εἰκάσειας; ἡ γυνὴ πάλιν
φρούδη, πρὶν εἰπεῖν ἐσθλὸν ἢ κακὸν λόγον.

ΑΓ. Καὐτὸς τεθάμβηκ’· ἐλπίσιν δὲ βόσκομαι
ἄχη τέκνου κλύουσαν ἐς πόλιν γόους
οὐκ ἀξιώσειν, ἀλλ’ ὑπὸ στέγης ἔσω
δμωαῖς προθήσειν πένθος οἰκεῖον στένειν.
Γνώμης γὰρ οὐκ ἄπειρος, ὥσθ’ ἁμαρτάνειν.

ΧΟ. Οὐκ οἶδ’· ἐμοὶ δ’ οὖν ἥ τ’ ἄγαν σιγὴ βαρὺ
δοκεῖ προσεῖναι χὴ μάτην πολλὴ βοή.

ΑΓ. Ἀλλ’ εἰσόμεσθα μή τι καὶ κατάσχετον
κρυφῇ καλύπτει καρδίᾳ θυμουμένη
1255 δόμους παραστείχοντες· εὖ γὰρ οὖν λέγεις·
καὶ τῆς ἄγαν γάρ ἐστί που σιγῆς βάρος.

ΧΟ. Καὶ μὴν ὅδ’ ἄναξ αὐτὸς ἐφήκει
μνῆμ’ ἐπίσημον διὰ χειρὸς ἔχων,
εἰ θέμις εἰπεῖν, οὐκ ἀλλοτρίαν
1260 ἄτην, ἀλλ’ αὐτὸς ἁμαρτών.

ΚΡ. Ἰὼ φρενῶν δυσφρόνων ἁμαρτήματα Str. 1 .
στερεὰ θανατόεντ’,
ὦ κτανόντας τε καὶ
θανόντας βλέποντες ἐμφυλίους.
1265 Ὤμοι ἐμῶν ἄνολβα βουλευμάτων.
Ἰὼ παῖ, νέος νέῳ ξὺν μόρῳ,
αἰαῖ αἰαῖ,
ἔθανες, ἀπελύθης,
ἐμαῖς οὐδὲ σαῖσι δυσβουλίαις.
1270 ΧΟ. Οἴμ’ ὡς ἔοικας ὀψὲ τὴν δίκην ἰδεῖν.

ΚΡ. Οἴμοι,
ἔχω μαθὼν δείλαιος· ἐν δ’ ἐμῷ κάρᾳ
θεὸς τότ’ ἄρα τότε μέγα βάρος μ’ ἔχων

ἔπαισεν, ἐν δ’ ἔσεισεν ἀγρίαις ὁδοῖς,
οἴμοι, λεωπάτητον ἀντρέπων χαράν.
Φεῦ φεῦ, ἰὼ πόνοι βροτῶν δύσπονοι.

ΕΞΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
Ὦ δέσποθ’, ὡς ἔχων τε καὶ κεκτημένος,
τὰ μὲν πρὸ χειρῶν τάδε φέρων, τὰ δ’ ἐν δόμοις
ἔοικας ἥκειν καὶ τάχ’ ὄψεσθαι κακά.

ΚΡ. Τί δ’ ἔστιν αὖ κάκιον ἐκ κακῶν ἔτι;

ΕΞ. Γυνὴ τέθνηκεν, τοῦδε παμμήτωρ νεκροῦ,
δύστηνος, ἄρτι νεοτόμοισι πλήγμασιν.

ΚΡ. Ἰὼ ἰὼ δυσκάθαρτος Ἅιδου λιμήν, Ant. 1 .
τί μ’ ἄρα τί μ’ ὀλέκεις;
Ὦ κακάγγελτά μοι
προπέμψας ἄχη, τίνα θροεῖς λόγον;
Αἰαῖ, ὀλωλότ’ ἄνδρ’ ἐπεξειργάσω.
Τί φῄς, παῖ; τίν’ αὖ λέγεις μοι νέον,
αἰαῖ, αἰαῖ,
σφάγιον ἐπ’ ὀλέθρῳ
γυναικεῖον ἀμφικεῖσθαι μόρον;

ΕΞ. Ὁρᾶν πάρεστιν· οὐ γὰρ ἐν μυχοῖς ἔτι.

ΚΡ. Οἴμοι,
κακὸν τόδ’ ἄλλο δεύτερον βλέπω τάλας.
Τίς ἆρα, τίς με πότμος ἔτι περιμένει;
Ἔχω μὲν ἐν χείρεσσιν ἀρτίως τέκνον,
τάλας, τὸν δ’ ἔναντα προσβλέπω νεκρόν.
Φεῦ φεῦ μᾶτερ ἀθλία, φεῦ τέκνον.
ΧΞ. Ἡ δ’ ὀξυθήκτῳ βωμία περὶ ξ‹ίφει›
λύει κελαινὰ βλέφαρα, κωκύσασα μὲν
τοῦ πρὶν θανόντος Μεγαρέως κλεινὸν λάχος,
αὖθις δὲ τοῦδε, λοίσθιον δὲ σοὶ κακὰς
πράξεις ἐφυμνήσασα τῷ παιδοκτόνῳ.

ΚΡ. Αἰαῖ αἰαῖ, Str. 2 .
ἀνέπταν φόβῳ. Τί μ’ οὐκ ἀνταίαν
ἔπαισέν τις ἀμφιθήκτῳ ξίφει;
δείλαιος ἐγώ, αἰαῖ,
δειλαίᾳ δὲ συγκέκραμαι δύᾳ.

ΕΞ. Ὡς αἰτίαν γε τῶνδε κἀκείνων ἔχων
πρὸς τῆς θανούσης τῆσδ’ ἐπεσκήπτου μόρων.

ΚΡ. Ποίῳ δὲ κἀπελύσατ’ ἐν φοναῖς τρόπῳ;
ΕΞ. Παίσασ’ ὑφ’ ἧπαρ αὐτόχειρ αὐτήν, ὅπως
παιδὸς τόδ’ ᾔσθετ’ ὀξυκώκυτον πάθος.

ΚΡ. Ὤμοι μοι, τάδ’ οὐκ ἐπ’ ἄλλον βροτῶν
ἐμᾶς ἁρμόσει ποτ’ ἐξ αἰτίας.
Ἐγὼ γάρ σ’ ἐγώ ‹σ’› ἔκανον, ὦ μέλεος,

ἐγώ, φάμ’ ἔτυμον. Ἰὼ πρόσπολοι,
‹ἀπ›άγετέ μ’ ὅτι τάχος, ἄγετέ μ’ ἐκποδών,
τὸν οὐκ ὄντα μᾶλλον ἢ μηδένα.

ΧΟ. Κέρδη παραινεῖς, εἴ τι κέρδος ἐν κακοῖς·
βράχιστα γὰρ κράτιστα τἀν ποσὶν κακά.

ΚΡ. Ἴτω, ἴτω, Ant. 2 .
φανήτω μόρων ὁ κάλλιστ’ ἔχων,
ἐμοὶ τερμίαν ἄγων ἀμέραν
ὕπατος· ἴτω, ἴτω,
ὅπως μηκέτ’ ἆμαρ ἄλλ’ εἰσίδω.

ΧΟ. Μέλλοντα ταῦτα. Τῶν προκειμένων τι χρὴ
πράσσειν· μέλει γὰρ τῶνδ’ ὅτοισι χρὴ μέλειν.

ΚΡ. Ἀλλ’ ὧν ἐρῶ μὲν ταῦτα συγκατηυξάμην.

ΧΟ. Μή νυν προσεύχου μηδέν· ὡς πεπρωμένης
οὐκ ἔστι θνητοῖς συμφορᾶς ἀπαλλαγή.

ΚΡ. Ἄγοιτ’ ἂν μάταιον ἄνδρ’ ἐκποδών,
ὅς, ὦ παῖ, σέ τ’ οὐχ ἑκὼν κάκτανον
σέ τ’ αὖ τάνδ’, ὤμοι μέλεος, οὐδ’ ἔχω
ὅπᾳ πρὸς πότερον ἴδω· πάντα γὰρ

λέχρια τἀν χεροῖν, τὰ δ’ ἐπὶ κρατί μοι
πότμος δυσκόμιστος εἰσήλατο.

ΧΟ. Πολλῷ τὸ φρονεῖν εὐδαιμονίας
πρῶτον ὑπάρχει· χρὴ δὲ τά γ’ εἰς θεοὺς
μηδὲν ἀσεπτεῖν; μεγάλοι δὲ λόγοι
μεγάλας πληγὰς τῶν ὑπεραύχων
ἀποτείσαντες
γήρᾳ τὸ φρονεῖν ἐδίδαξαν.

Τραχινίαι - THE WOMEN OF TRACHIS

ΔΗΙΑΝΕΙΡΑ
Λόγος μέν ἐστ’ ἀρχαῖος ἀνθρώπων φανεὶς
ὡς οὐκ ἂν αἰῶν’ ἐκμάθοις βροτῶν, πρὶν ἂν
θάνῃ τις, οὔτ’ εἰ χρηστὸς οὔτ’ εἴ τῳ κακός·
ἐγὼ δὲ τὸν ἐμόν, καὶ πρὶν εἰς Ἅιδου μολεῖν,
5 ἔξοιδ’ ἔχουσα δυστυχῆ τε καὶ βαρύν,
ἥτις πατρὸς μὲν ἐν δόμοισιν Οἰνέως
ναίουσ’ ‹ἔτ’› ἐν Πλευρῶνι νυμφείων ὄκνον
ἄλγιστον ἔσχον, εἴ τις Αἰτωλὶς γυνή.
Μνηστὴρ γὰρ ἦν μοι ποταμός, Ἀχελῷον λέγω,
10 ὅς μ’ ἐν τρισὶν μορφαῖσιν ἐξήτει πατρός,
φοιτῶν ἐναργὴς ταῦρος, ἄλλοτ’ αἰόλος
δράκων ἑλικτός, ἄλλοτ’ ἀνδρείῳ τύπῳ
βούκρανος, ἐκ δὲ δασκίου γενειάδος
κρουνοὶ διερραίνοντο κρηναίου ποτοῦ.
15 Τοιόνδ’ ἐγὼ μνηστῆρα προσδεδεγμένη
δύστηνος αἰεὶ κατθανεῖν ἐπηυχόμην,
πρὶν τῆσδε κοίτης ἐμπελασθῆναί ποτε.
Χρόνῳ δ’ ἐν ὑστέρῳ μέν, ἀσμένῃ δέ μοι,
ὁ κλεινὸς ἦλθε Ζηνὸς Ἀλκμήνης τε παῖς,
20 ὃς εἰς ἀγῶνα τῷδε συμπεσὼν μάχης
ἐκλύεταί με· καὶ τρόπον μὲν ἂν πόνων
οὐκ ἂν διείποιμ’, οὐ γὰρ οἶδ’, ἀλλ’ ὅστις ἦν
θακῶν ἀταρβὴς τῆς θέας, ὅδ’ ἂν λέγοι·
ἐγὼ γὰρ ἧμην ἐκπεπληγμένη φόβῳ
25 μή μοι τὸ κάλλος ἄλγος ἐξεύροι ποτέ.
Τέλος δ’ ἔθηκε Ζεὺς Ἀγώνιος καλῶς,
εἰ δὴ καλῶς· λέχος γὰρ Ἡρακλεῖ κριτὸν
ξυστᾶσ’ ἀεί τιν’ ἐκ φόβου φόβον τρέφω,
κείνου προκηραίνουσα· νὺξ γὰρ εἰσάγει
30 καὶ νὺξ ἀπωθεῖ διαδεδεγμένη πόνον.
Κἀφύσαμεν δὴ παῖδας, οὓς κεῖνός ποτε,
γῆτης ὅπως ἄρουραν ἔκτοπον λαβών,
σπείρων μόνον προσεῖδε κἀξαμῶν ἄπαξ·
τοιοῦτος αἰὼν εἰς δόμους τε κἀκ δόμων

ἀεὶ τὸν ἄνδρ’ ἔπεμπε λατρεύοντά τῳ.
Νῦν δ’ ἡνίκ’ ἄθλων τῶνδ’ ὑπερτελὴς ἔφυ,
ἐνταῦθα δὴ μάλιστα ταρβήσασ’ ἔχω.
Ἐξ οὗ γὰρ ἔκτα κεῖνος Ἰφίτου βίαν,
ἡμεῖς μὲν ἐν Τραχῖνι τῇδ’ ἀνάστατοι
ξένῳ παρ’ ἀνδρὶ ναίομεν, κεῖνος δ’ ὅπου
βέβηκεν οὐδεὶς οἶδε, πλὴν ἐμοὶ πικρὰς
ὠδῖνας αὐτοῦ προσβαλὼν ἀποίχεται.
Σχεδὸν δ’ ἐπίσταμαί τι πῆμ’ ἔχοντά νιν·
χρόνον γὰρ οὐχὶ βαιόν, ἀλλ’ ἤδη δέκα
μῆνας πρὸς ἄλλοις πέντ’ ἀκήρυκτος μένει.
Κἄστιν τι δεινὸν πῆμα· τοιαύτην ἐμοὶ
δέλτον λιπὼν ἔστειχε, τὴν ἐγὼ θαμὰ
θεοῖς ἀρῶμαι πημονῆς ἄτερ λαβεῖν.

ΔΟΥΛΗ ΤΡΟΦΟΣ

Δέσποινα Δηάνειρα, πολλὰ μέν σ’ ἐγὼ
κατεῖδον ἤδη πανδάκρυτ’ ὀδύρματα
τὴν Ἡράκλειον ἔξοδον γοωμένην·
νῦν δ’, εἰ δίκαιον τοὺς ἐλευθέρους φρενοῦν
γνώμαισι δούλαις, κἀμὲ χρὴ φράσαι τόσον·
πῶς παισὶ μὲν τοσοῖσδε πληθύεις, ἀτὰρ
ἀνδρὸς κατὰ ζήτησιν οὐ πέμπεις τινά,
μάλιστα δ’ ὅνπερ εἰκὸς Ὕλλον, εἰ πατρὸς
νέμοι τιν’ ὥραν τοῦ καλῶς πράσσειν δοκεῖν;
Ἐγγὺς δ’ ὅδ’ αὐτὸς ἀρτίπους θρῴσκει δόμους,
ὥστ’, εἴ τί σοι πρὸς καιρὸν ἐννέπειν δοκῶ,
πάρεστι χρῆσθαι τἀνδρὶ τοῖς τ’ ἐμοῖς λόγοις.

ΔΗ. Ὦ τέκνον, ὦ παῖ, κἀξ ἀγεννήτων ἄρα
μῦθοι καλῶς πίπτουσιν· ἥδε γὰρ γυνὴ
δούλη μέν, εἴρηκεν δ’ ἐλεύθερον λόγον.

ΥΛΛΟΣ
Ποῖον; δίδαξον, μῆτερ, εἰ διδακτά μοι.
ΔΗ. Σὲ πατρὸς οὕτω δαρὸν ἐξενωμένου
τὸ μὴ πυθέσθαι ποῦ ‘στιν αἰσχύνην φέρει.

ΥΛ. Ἀλλ’ οἶδα, μύθοις εἴ τι πιστεύειν χρεών.

ΔΗ. Καὶ ποῦ κλύεις νιν, τέκνον, ἱδρῦσθαι χθονός;

ΥΛ. Τὸν μὲν παρελθόντ’ ἄροτον ἐν μήκει χρόνου
Λυδῇ γυναικί φασί νιν λάτριν πονεῖν.

ΔΗ. Πᾶν τοίνυν, εἰ καὶ τοῦτ’ ἔτλη, κλύοι τις ἄν.

ΥΛ. Ἀλλ’ ἐξαφεῖται τοῦδέ γ’, ὡς ἐγὼ κλύω.

ΔΗ. Ποῦ δῆτα νῦν ζῶν ἢ θανὼν ἀγγέλλεται;

ΥΛ. Εὐβοῖδα χώραν φασίν, Εὐρύτου πόλιν,
ἐπιστρατεύειν αὐτὸν ἢ μέλλειν ἔτι.

ΔΗ. Ἆρ’ οἶσθα δῆτ’, ὦ τέκνον, ὡς ἔλειπέ μοι
μαντεῖα πιστὰ τῆσδε τῆς χώρας πέρι;

ΥΛ. Τὰ ποῖα, μῆτερ; τὸν λόγον γὰρ ἀγνοῶ.

ΔΗ. Ὡς ἢ τελευτὴν τοῦ βίου μέλλει τελεῖν,
80 ἢ τοῦτον ἆρας ἆθλον εἰς τό γ’ ὕστερον
τὸν λοιπὸν ἤδη βίοτον εὐαίων’ ἕξειν.
Ἐν οὖν ῥοπῇ τοιᾷδε κειμένῳ, τέκνον,
οὐκ εἶ ξυνέρξων, ἡνίκ’ ἢ σεσώσμεθα
85 κείνου βίον σώσαντος, ἢ οἰχόμεσθ’ ἅμα;

ΥΛ. Ἀλλ’ εἶμι, μῆτερ· εἰ δὲ θεσφάτων ἐγὼ
βάξιν κατῄδη τῶνδε, κἂν πάλαι παρῆ·
νῦν δ’ ὁ ξυνήθης πότμος οὐκ εἴα πατρὸς
ἡμᾶς προταρβεῖν οὐδὲ δειμαίνειν ἄγαν.
90 Νῦν δ’ ὡς ξυνίημ’, οὐδὲν ἐλλείψω τὸ μὴ
πᾶσαν πυθέσθαι τῶνδ’ ἀλήθειαν πέρι.

ΔΗ. Χώρει νυν, ὦ παῖ· καὶ γὰρ ὑστέρῳ τό γ’ εὖ
πράσσειν, ἐπεὶ πύθοιτο, κέρδος ἐμπολᾷ.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
Ὃν αἰόλα νὺξ ἐναριζομένα Str. 1 .
95 τίκτει κατευνάζει τε φλογιζόμενον
Ἅλιον, Ἅλιον αἰτῶ

τοῦτο καρῦξαι τὸν Ἀλκμή-
νας, πόθι μοι πόθι μοι ναί-
ει ποτ’, ὦ λαμπρᾷ στεροπᾷ φλεγέθων,
ἢ ποντίας αὐλῶνας, ἢ δισσαῖσιν ἀπείροις κλιθείς,
εἶπ’, ὦ κρατιστεύων κατ’ ὄμμα.
Ποθουμέναᾳ γὰρ φρενὶ πυνθάνομαι Ant. 1 .
τὰν ἀμφινεικῆ Δηϊάνειραν ἀεί,
105 οἷά τιν’ ἄθλιον ὄρνιν,
οὔποτ’ εὐνάζειν ἀδακρύ-
των βλεφάρων πόθον, ἀλλ’ εὔ-
μναστον ἀνδρὸς δεῖμα τρέφουσαν ὁδοῦ
ἐνθυμίοις εὐναῖς ἀνανδρώτοισι τρύχεσθαι κακὰν
δύστανον ἐλπίζουσαν αἶσαν.
Πολλὰ γὰρ ὥστ’ ἀκάμαντος Str. 2 .
ἢ νότου ἢ βορέα τις
κύματ’ ‹ἂν› εὐρέϊ πόντῳ
115 βάντ’ ἐπιόντα τ’ ἴδοι·
οὕτω δὲ τὸν Καδμογενῆ
‹σ›τρέφει, τὸ δ’ αὔξει βιότου
πολύπονον ὥσπερ πέλαγος
Κρήσιον· ἀλλά τις θεῶν
120 αἰὲν ἀναμπλάκητον Ἄι-
δα σφε δόμων ἐρύκει.
Ὧν ἐπιμεμφομένα σ’ αἰ-Ant. 2 .
δοῖα μέν, ἀντία δ’ οἵσω·
φαμὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἀποτρύειν
125 ἐλπίδα τὰν ἀγαθὰν
χρῆναί σ’· ἀνάλγητα γὰρ οὐδ’
ὁ πάντα κραίνων βασιλεὺς
ἐπέβαλε θνατοῖς Κρονίδας·
ἀλλ’ ἐπὶ πῆμα καὶ χαρὰ
130 πᾶσι κυκλοῦσιν, οἷον Ἄρ-
κτου στροφάδες κέλευθοι.
Μένει γὰρ οὔτ’ αἰόλα Ep.
νὺξ βροτοῖσιν οὔτε Κῆρες οὔτε πλοῦτος,
ἀλλ’ ἄφαρ βέβακε, τῷ δ’ ἐπέρχεται
135 χαίρειν τε καὶ στέρεσθαι.
Ἃ καὶ σὲ τὰν ἄνασσαν ἐλπίσιν λέγω
τάδ’ αἰὲν ἴσχειν· ἐπεὶ τίς ὧδε

τέκνοισι Ζῆν’ ἄβουλον εἶδεν;

ΔΗ. Πεπυσμένη μέν, ὡς ἀπεικάσαι, πάρει
πάθημα τοὐμόν· ὡς δ’ ἐγὼ θυμοφθορῶ
μήτ’ ἐκμάθοις παθοῦσα, νῦν δ’ ἄπειρος εἶ.
Τὸ γὰρ νεάζον ἐν τοιοῖσδε βόσκεται
χώροισιν αὐτοῦ, καί νιν οὐ θάλπος θεοῦ,
οὐδ’ ὄμβρος, οὐδὲ πνευμάτων οὐδὲν κλονεῖ,
ἀλλ’ ἡδοναῖς ἄμοχθον ἐξαίρει βίον
ἐς τοῦθ’ ἕως τις ἀντὶ παρθένου γυνὴ
κληθῇ λάβῃ τ’ ἐν νυκτὶ φροντίδων μέρος
ἤτοι πρὸς ἀνδρὸς ἢ τέκνων φοβουμένη·
τότ’ ἄν τις εἰσίδοιτο, τὴν αὐτοῦ σκοπῶν
πρᾶξιν, κακοῖσιν οἷς ἐγὼ βαρύνομαι.
Πάθη μὲν οὖν δὴ πόλλ’ ἔγωγ’ ἐκλαυσάμην·
ἓν δ’, οἷον οὔπω πρόσθεν, αὐτίκ’ ἐξερῶ.
Ὁδὸν γὰρ ἧμος τὴν τελευταίαν ἄναξ
ὡρμᾶτ’ ἀπ’ οἴκων Ἡρακλῆς, τότ’ ἐν δόμοις
λείπει παλαιὰν δέλτον ἐγγεγραμμένην
ξυνθήμαθ’ ἁμοὶ πρόσθεν οὐκ ἔτλη ποτὲ
πολλοὺς ἀγῶνας ἐξιὼν οὕτω φράσαι,
ἀλλ’ ὥς τι δράσων εἶρπε κοὐ θανούμενος.
Νῦν δ’, ὡς ἔτ’ οὐκ ὤν, εἶπε μὲν λέχους ὅ τι
χρείη μ’ ἐλέσθαι κτῆσιν, εἶπε δ’ ἢν τέκνοις
μοῖραν πατρῴας γῆς διαιρετὸν νέμοι,
χρόνον προτάξας, ὡς τρίμηνος ἡνίκα
χώρας ἀπείη κἀνιαύσιος βεβώς,
τότ’ ἢ θανεῖν χρείη σφε τῷδε τῷ χρόνῳ,
ἢ τοῦθ’ ὑπεκδραμόντα τοῦ χρόνου τέλος
τὸ λοιπὸν ἤδη ζῆν ἀλυπήτῳ βίῳ.
Τοιαῦτ’ ἔφραζε πρὸς θεῶν εἱμαρμένα
τῶν Ἡρακλείων ἐκτελευτᾶσθαι πόνων,
ὡς τὴν παλαιὰν φηγὸν αὐδῆσαί ποτε
Δωδῶνι δισσῶν ἐκ πελειάδων ἔφη.
Καὶ τῶνδε ναμέρτεια συμβαίνει χρόνου
τοῦ νῦν παρόντος, ὡς τελεσθῆναι χρεών·

ὥσθ’ ἡδέως εὔδουσαν ἐκπηδᾶν ἐμὲ
φόβῳ, φίλαι, ταρβοῦσαν, εἴ με χρὴ μένειν
πάντων ἀρίστου φωτὸς ἑστερημένην.

ΧΟ. Εὐφημίαν νῦν ἴσχ’, ἐπεὶ καταστεφῆ
στείχονθ’ ὁρῶ τιν’ ἄνδρα πρὸς χαρὰν λόγων.
ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
Δέσποινα Δηάνειρα, πρῶτος ἀγγέλων
ὄκνου σε λύσω· τὸν γὰρ Ἀλκμήνης τόκον
καὶ ζῶντ’ ἐπίστω καὶ κρατοῦντα κἀκ μάχης
ἄγοντ’ ἀπαρχὰς θεοῖσι τοῖς ἐγχωρίοις.

ΔΗ. Τίν’ εἶπας, ὦ γεραιέ, τόνδε μοι λόγον;
ΑΓ. Τάχ’ ἐς δόμους σοὺς τὸν πολύζηλον πόσιν
ἥξειν, φανέντα σὺν κράτει νικηφόρῳ.

ΔΗ. Καὶ τοῦ τόδ’ ἀστῶν ἢ ξένων μαθὼν λέγεις;

ΑΓ. Ἐν βουθερεῖ λειμῶνι πρόσπολος θροεῖ,
Λίχας ὁ κῆρυξ, ταῦτα· τοῦ δ’ ἐγὼ κλύων
ἀπῆξ’, ὅπως τοι πρῶτος ἀγγείλας τάδε
πρὸς σοῦ τι κερδάναιμι καὶ κτῴμην χάριν.

ΔΗ. Αὐτὸς δὲ πῶς ἄπεστιν, εἴπερ εὐτυχεῖ;

ΑΓ. Οὐκ εὐμαρείᾳ χρώμενος πολλῇ, γύναι·
κύκλῳ γὰρ αὐτὸν Μηλιεὺς ἅπας λεὼς
195 κρίνει παραστάς, οὐδ’ ἔχει βῆναι πρόσω·
τὸ γὰρ ποθοῦν ἕκαστος ἐκμαθεῖν θέλων
οὐκ ἂν μεθεῖτο, πρὶν καθ’ ἡδονὴν κλύειν.
Οὕτως ἐκεῖνος οὐχ ἑκών, ἑκοῦσι δὲ
ξύνεστιν· ὄψει δ’ αὐτὸν αὐτίκ’ ἐμφανῆ.
200 ΔΗ. Ὦ Ζεῦ, τὸν Οἴτης ἄτομον ὃς λειμῶν’ ἔχεις,
ἔδωκας ἡμῖν ἀλλὰ σὺν χρόνῳ χαράν.
Φωνήσατ’, ὦ γυναῖκες, αἵ τ’ εἴσω στέγης
αἵ τ’ ἐκτὸς αὐλῆς, ὡς ἄελπτον ὄμμ’ ἐμοὶ
φήμης ἀνασχὸν τῆσδε νῦν καρπούμεθα.
205 ΧΟ. Ἀνολολύξεται δόμος ἐφεστίοι-
σιν ἀλαλαῖς ὁ μελλόνυμ-
φος, ἐν δὲ κοινὸς ἀρσένων
ἴτω κλαγγὰ τὸν εὐφαρέτραν
210 Ἀπόλλω προστάταν· ὁμοῦ δὲ
παιᾶνα, παιᾶν’ ἀνάγετ’, ὦ παρθένοι,
βοᾶτε τὰν ὁμόσπορον
Ἄρτεμιν Ὀρτυγίαν,
ἐλαφαβόλον, ἀμφίπυρον,
215 γείτονάς τε Νύμφας.
Ἀείρομ’ οὐδ’ ἀπώσομαι
τὸν αὐλόν, ὦ τύραννε τᾶς ἐμᾶς φρενός.
Ἰδού μ’ ἀναταράσσει
‹εὐοῖ› εὐοῖ μ’
220 ὁ κισσὸς ἄρτι βακχίαν
ὑποστρέφων ἅμιλλαν.
Ἰὼ ἰὼ Παιάν· ἴδ’, ὦ φίλα γύναι.
τάδ’ ἀντίπρῳρα δή σοι
βλέπειν πάρεστ’ ἐναργῆ.
225 ΔΗ. Ὁρῶ, φίλαι γυναῖκες, οὐδέ μ’ ὄμματος
φρουρὰ παρῆλθε τόνδε μὴ λεύσσειν στόλον·
χαίρειν δὲ τὸν κήρυκα προὐννέπω, χρόνῳ
πολλῷ φανέντα, χαρτὸν εἴ τι καὶ φέρεις.

ΛΙΧΑΣ
Ἀλλ’ εὖ μὲν ἴγμεθ’, εὖ δὲ προσφωνούμεθα,
γύναι, κατ’ ἔργου κτῆσιν· ἄνδρα γὰρ καλῶς
πράσσοντ’ ἀνάγκη χρηστὰ κερδαίνειν ἔπη.

ΔΗ. Ὦ φίλτατ’ ἀνδρῶν, πρῶθ’ ἃ πρῶτα βούλομαι
δίδαξον, εἰ ζῶνθ’ Ἡρακλέα προσδέξομαι.

ΛΙ. Ἔγωγέ τοί σφ’ ἔλειπον ἰσχύοντά τε
καὶ ζῶντα καὶ θάλλοντα κοὐ νόσῳ βαρύν.

ΔΗ. Ποῦ γῆς; πατρῴας εἴτε βαρβάρου; λέγε.

ΛΙ. Ἀκτή τις ἔστ’ Εὐβοιίς, ἔνθ’ ὁρίζεται
βωμοὺς τέλη τ’ ἔγκαρπα Κηναίῳ Διί.

ΔΗ. Εὐκταῖα φαίνων ἢ ‘πὸ μαντείας τινός;
ΛΙ. Εὐχαῖς, ὅθ’ ἥρει τῶνδ’ ἀνάστατον δορὶ
χώραν γυναικῶν ὧν ὁρᾷς ἐν ὄμμασιν.

ΔΗ. Αὗται δέ, πρὸς θεῶν, τοῦ ποτ’ εἰσὶ καὶ τίνες;
οἰκτραὶ γάρ, εἰ μὴ ξυμφοραὶ κλέπτουσί με.

ΛΙ. Ταύτας ἐκεῖνος Εὐρύτου πέρσας πόλιν
ἐξείλεθ’ αὐτῷ κτῆμα καὶ θεοῖς κριτόν.

ΔΗ. Ἦ κἀπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πόλει τὸν ἄσκοπον
χρόνον βεβὼς ἦν ἡμερῶν ἀνήριθμον;

ΛΙ. Οὔκ, ἀλλὰ τὸν μὲν πλεῖστον ἐν Λυδοῖς χρόνον
κατείχεθ’, ὥς φησ’ αὐτός, οὐκ ἐλεύθερος,
ἀλλ’ ἐμποληθείς· τοῦ λόγου δ’ οὐ χρὴ φθόνον,
γύναι, προσεῖναι, Ζεὺς ὅτου πράκτωρ φανῇ.
Κεῖνος δὲ πραθεὶς Ὀμφάλῃ τῇ βαρβάρῳ
ἐνιαυτὸν ἐξέπλησεν, ὡς αὐτὸς λέγει,
χοὔτως ἐδήχθη τοῦτο τοὔνειδος λαβὼν
ὥσθ’ ὅρκον αὐτῷ προσβαλὼν διώμοσεν
ἦ μὴν τὸν ἀγχιστῆρα τοῦδε τοῦ πάθους
ξὺν παιδὶ καὶ γυναικὶ δουλώσειν ἔτι.
Κοὐχ ἡλίωσε τοὔπος, ἀλλ’ ὅθ’ ἁγνὸς ἦν,
στρατὸν λαβὼν ἐπακτὸν ἔρχεται πόλιν
τὴν Εὐρυτείαν· τόνδε γὰρ μεταίτιον
μόνον βροτῶν ἔφασκε τοῦδ’ εἶναι πάθους·
ὃς αὐτὸν ἐλθόντ’ ἐς δόμους ἐφέστιον,
ξένον παλαιὸν ὄντα, πολλὰ μὲν λόγοις
ἐπερρόθησε, πολλὰ δ’ ἀτηρᾷ φρενί,
λέγων χεροῖν μὲν ὡς ἄφυκτ’ ἔχων βέλη
τῶν ὧν τέκνων λείποιτο πρὸς τόξου κρίσιν,
φώνει δὲ δοῦλος ἀνδρὸς ὡς ἐλευθέρου
ῥαίοιτο· δείπνοις δ’ ἡνίκ’ ἦν ᾠνωμένος,
ἔρριψεν ἐκτὸς αὐτόν. Ὧν ἔχων χόλον,
ὡς ἵκετ’ αὖθις Ἴφιτος Τιρυνθίαν
πρὸς κλιτὺν ἵππους νομάδας ἐξιχνοσκοπῶν,
τότ’ ἄλλοσ’ αὐτὸν ὄμμα, θατέρᾳ δὲ νοῦν
ἔχοντ’, ἀπ’ ἄκρας ἦκε πυργώδους πλακός.
Ἔργου δ’ ἕκατι τοῦδε μηνίσας ἄναξ,
ὁ τῶν ἁπάντων Ζεὺς πατὴρ Ὀλύμπιος,

πρατόν νιν ἐξέπεμψεν, οὐδ’ ἠνέσχετο
ὀθούνεκ’ αὐτὸν μοῦνον ἀνθρώπων δόλῳ
ἔκτεινεν· εἰ γὰρ ἐμφανῶς ἠμύνατο,
Ζεύς τἂν συνέγνω ξὺν δίκῃ χειρουμένῳ·
280 ὕβριν γὰρ οὐ στέργουσιν οὐδὲ δαίμονες.
Κεῖνοι δ’ ὑπερχλίοντες ἐκ γλώσσης κακῆς,
αὐτοὶ μὲν Ἅιδου πάντες εἶσ’ οἰκήτορες,
πόλις δὲ δούλη· τάσδε δ’ ἅσπερ εἰσορᾷς
ἐξ ὀλβίων ἄζηλον εὑροῦσαι βίον
285 χωροῦσι πρὸς σέ· ταῦτα γὰρ πόσις τε σὸς
ἐφεῖτ’, ἐγὼ δὲ πιστὸς ὢν κείνῳ τελῶ.
Αὐτὸν δ’ ἐκεῖνον, εὖτ’ ἂν ἁγνὰ θύματα
ῥέξῃ πατρῴῳ Ζηνὶ τῆς ἁλώσεως,
φρόνει νιν ὡς ἥξοντα· τοῦτο γὰρ λόγου
290 πολλοῦ καλῶς λεχθέντος ἥδιστον κλύειν.

ΧΟ. Ἄνασσα, νῦν σοι τέρψις ἐμφανὴς κυρεῖ,
τῶν μὲν παρόντων, τὰ δὲ πεπυσμένῃ λόγῳ.

ΔΗ. Πῶς δ’ οὐκ ἐγὼ χαίροιμ’ ἄν, ἀνδρὸς εὐτυχῆ
κλύουσα πρᾶξιν τήνδε, πανδίκῳ φρενί;
295 πολλή ‘στ’ ἀνάγκη τῇδε τοῦτο συντρέχειν.
Ὅμως δ’ ἔνεστι τοῖσιν εὖ σκοπουμένοις
ταρβεῖν τὸν εὖ πράσσοντα μὴ σφαλῇ ποτε.
Ἐμοὶ γὰρ οἶκτος δεινὸς εἰσέβη, φίλαι,
ταύτας ὁρώσῃ δυσπότμους ἐπὶ ξένης
300 χώρας ἀοίκους ἀπάτορᾶς τ’ ἀλωμένας,
αἳ πρὶν μὲν ἦσαν ἐξ ἐλευθέρων ἴσως
ἀνδρῶν, τανῦν δὲ δοῦλον ἴσχουσιν βίον.
Ὦ Ζεῦ Τροπαῖε, μή ποτ’ εἰσίδοιμί σε
πρὸς τοὐμὸν οὕτω σπέρμα χωρήσαντά ποι,
305 μηδ’, εἴ τι δράσεις, τῆσδέ γε ζώσης ἔτι·
οὕτως ἐγὼ δέδοικα τάσδ’ ὁρωμένη.
Ὦ δυστάλαινα, τίς ποτ’ εἶ νεανίδων;

ἄνανδρος, ἢ τεκνοῦσσα; πρὸς μὲν γὰρ φύσιν
πάντων ἄπειρος τῶνδε, γενναία δέ τις.
310 Λίχα, τίνος ποτ’ ἐστὶν ἡ ξένη βροτῶν;
τίς ἡ τεκοῦσα, τίς δ’ ὁ φιτύσας πατήρ;
ἔξειπ’· ἐπεί νιν τῶνδε πλεῖστον ὤκτισα
βλέπουσ’, ὅσῳπερ καὶ φρονεῖν οἶδεν μόνη.

ΛΙ. Τί δ’ οἶδ’ ἐγώ; τί δ’ ἄν με καὶ κρίνοις; ἴσως
315 γέννημα τῶν ἐκεῖθεν οὐκ ἐν ὑστάτοις.

ΔΗ. Μὴ τῶν τυράννων; Εὐρύτου σπορά τις ἦν;

ΛΙ. Οὐκ οἶδα· καὶ γὰρ οὐδ’ ἀνιστόρουν μακράν.

ΔΗ. Οὐδ’ ὄνομα πρός του τῶν ξυνεμπόρων ἔχεις;

ΛΙ. Ἥκιστα· σιγῇ τοὐμὸν ἔργον ἤνυτον.
320 ΔΗ. Εἶπ’, ὦ τάλαιν’, ἀλλ’ ἡμὶν ἐκ σαυτῆς· ἐπεὶ
καὶ ξυμφορά τοι μὴ εἰδέναι σέ γ’ ἥτις εἶ.

ΛΙ. Οὔ τἄρα τῷ γε πρόσθεν οὐδὲν ἐξ ἴσου
χρόνῳ διοίσει γλῶσσαν, ἥτις οὐδαμὰ
προὔφηνεν οὔτε μεῖζον’ οὔτ’ ἐλάσσονα,
325 ἀλλ’ αἰὲν ὠδίνουσα συμφορᾶς βάρος
δακρυρροεῖ δύστηνος, ἐξ ὅτου πάτραν

διήνεμον λέλοιπεν. Ἡ δέ τοι τύχη
κακὴ μὲν αὐτῇ γ’, ἀλλὰ συγγνώμην ἔχει.

ΔΗ. Ἢ δ’ οὖν ἐάσθω, καὶ πορευέσθω στέγας
ὅπως ὅπως ἥδιστα, μηδὲ πρὸς κακοῖς
τοῖς οὖσι λύπην πρός γ’ ἐμοῦ διπλῆν λάβοι·
ἄλις γὰρ ἡ παροῦσα. Πρὸς δὲ δώματα
χωρῶμεν ἤδη πάντες, ὡς σύ θ’ οἷ θέλεις
σπεύδῃς, ἐγώ τε τἄνδον ἐξαρκῆ τιθῶ.
ΑΓ. Αὐτοῦ γε πρῶτον βαιὸν ἀμμείνασ’, ὅπως
μάθῃς ἄνευ τῶνδ’ οὔστινάς τ’ ἄγεις ἔσω,
ὧν τ’ οὐδὲν εἰσήκουσας ἐκμάθῃς γ’ ἃ δεῖ·
τούτων ἔχω γὰρ πάντ’ ἐπιστήμην ἐγώ.

ΔΗ. Τί δ’ ἐστί; τοῦ με τήνδ’ ἐφίστασαι βάσιν;
ΑΓ. Σταθεῖσ’ ἄκουσον· καὶ γὰρ οὐδὲ τὸν πάρος
μῦθον μάτην ἤκουσας, οὐδὲ νῦν δοκῶ.

ΔΗ. Πότερον ἐκείνους δῆτα δεῦρ’ αὖθις πάλιν
καλῶμεν, ἢ ‘μοὶ ταῖσδέ τ’ ἐξειπεῖν θέλεις;

ΑΓ. Σοὶ ταῖσδέ τ’ οὐδὲν εἴργεται, τούτους δ’ ἔα.
ΔΗ. Καὶ δὴ βεβᾶσι, χὠ λόγος σημαινέτω.

ΑΓ. Ἀνὴρ ὅδ’ οὐδὲν ὧν ἔλεξεν ἀρτίως
φωνεῖ δίκης ἐς ὀρθόν, ἀλλ’ ἢ νῦν κακός,
ἢ πρόσθεν οὐ δίκαιος ἄγγελος παρῆν.

ΔΗ. Τί φῄς; σαφῶς μοι φράζε πᾶν ὅσον νοεῖς·
ἃ μὲν γὰρ ἐξείρηκας ἀγνοία μ’ ἔχει.

ΑΓ. Τούτου λέγοντος τἀνδρὸς εἰσήκουσ’ ἐγώ,
πολλῶν παρόντων μαρτύρων, ὡς τῆς κόρης
ταύτης ἕκατι κεῖνος Εὔρυτόν θ’ ἕλοι
τήν θ’ ὑψίπυργον Οἰχαλίαν, Ἔρως δέ νιν
μόνος θεῶν θέλξειεν αἰχμάσαι τάδε,
οὐ τἀπὶ Λυδοῖς οὐδ’ ὑπ’ Ὀμφάλῃ πόνων
λατρεύματ’, οὐδ’ ὁ ῥιπτὸς Ἰφίτου μόρος,
ὃν νῦν παρώσας οὗτος ἔμπαλιν λέγει.
Ἀλλ’ ἡνίκ’ οὐκ ἔπειθε τὸν φυτοσπόρον
τὴν παῖδα δοῦναι, κρύφιον ὡς ἔχοι λέχος,
ἔγκλημα μικρὸν αἰτίαν θ’ ἑτοιμάσας,
ἐπιστρατεύει πατρίδα τὴν ταύτης, ἐν ᾗ
τὸν Εὔρυτον τῶνδ’ εἶπε δεσπόζειν θρόνων,
κτείνει τ’ ἄνακτα πατέρα τῆσδε καὶ πόλιν
ἔπερσε. Καί νιν, ὡς ὁρᾷς, ἥκει δόμους
ὡς τούσδε πέμπων οὐκ ἀφροντίστως, γύναι,
οὐδ’ ὥστε δούλην· μηδὲ προσδόκα τόδε·
οὐδ’ εἰκός, εἴπερ ἐντεθέρμανται πόθῳ.
Ἔδοξεν οὖν μοι πρὸς σὲ δηλῶσαι τὸ πᾶν,
δέσποιν’, ὃ τοῦδε τυγχάνω μαθὼν πάρα.
Καὶ ταῦτα πολλοὶ πρὸς μέσῃ Τραχινίων
ἀγορᾷ συνεξήκουον ὡσαύτως ἐμοί,
ὥστ’ ἐξελέγχειν· εἰ δὲ μὴ λέγω φίλα,
οὐχ ἥδομαι, τὸ δ’ ὀρθὸν ἐξείρηχ’ ὅμως.
ΔΗ. Οἴμοι τάλαινα, ποῦ ποτ’ εἰμὶ πράγματος;
τίν’ εἰσδέδεγμαι πημονὴν ὑπόστεγον
λαθραῖον, ὤ, δύστηνος· ἆρ’ ἀνώνυμος
πέφυκεν, ὥσπερ οὐπάγων διώμνυτο;

ΑΓ. Ἦ κάρτα λαμπρὰ καὶ κατ᾽ ὄνομα καὶ φύσιν,
πατρὸς μὲν οὖσα γένεσιν Εὐρύτου ποτὲ
Ἰόλη ‘καλεῖτο, τῆς ἐκεῖνος οὐδαμὰ
βλάστας ἐφώνει, δῆθεν οὐδὲν ἱστορῶν.

ΧΟ. Ὅλοιντο μή τι πάντες οἱ κακοί, τὰ δὲ
λαθραῖ᾽ ὃς ἀσκεῖ μὴ πρέποντ᾽ αὐτῷ κακά.
ΔΗ. Τί χρὴ ποεῖν, γυναῖκες; ὡς ἐγὼ λόγοις
τοῖς νῦν παροῦσιν ἐκπεπληγμένη κυρῶ.

ΧΟ. Πεύθου μολοῦσα τἀνδρός, ὡς τάχ᾽ ἂν σαφῆ
λέξειεν, εἴ νιν πρὸς βίαν κρίνειν θέλοις.

ΔΗ. Ἀλλ᾽ εἶμι· καὶ γὰρ οὐκ ἀπὸ γνώμης λέγεις.
ΑΓ. Ἡμεῖς δὲ προσμένωμεν; ἢ τί χρὴ ποεῖν;

ΔΗ. Μίμν᾽, ὡς ὅδ᾽ ἀνὴρ οὐκ ἐμῶν ὑπ᾽ ἀγγέλων,
ἀλλ᾽ αὐτόκλητος ἐκ δόμων πορεύεται.

ΛΙ. Τί χρή, γύναι, μολόντα μ᾽ Ἡρακλεῖ λέγειν;
δίδαξον, ὡς ἕρποντος, εἰσορᾷς, ἐμοῦ.
ΔΗ. Ὡς ἐκ ταχείας σὺν χρόνῳ βραδεῖ μολὼν
ᾄσσεις, πρὶν ἡμᾶς κἀννεώσασθαι λόγους.

ΛΙ. Ἀλλ’ εἴ τι χρῄζεις ἱστορεῖν, πάρειμ’ ἐγώ.

ΔΗ. Ἦ καὶ τὸ πιστὸν τῆς ἀληθείας νεμεῖς;

ΛΙ. Ἵστω μέγας Ζεύς, ὧν γ’ ἂν ἐξειδὼς κυρῶ.
ΔΗ. Τίς ἡ γυνὴ δῆτ’ ἐστὶν ἣν ἥκεις ἄγων;

ΛΙ. Εὐβοιίς· ὧν δ’ ἔβλαστεν οὐκ ἔχω λέγειν.

ΑΓ. Οὗτος, βλέφ’ ὧδε. Πρὸς τίν’ ἐννέπειν δοκεῖς;

ΛΙ. Σὺ δ’ εἰς τί δή με τοῦτ’ ἐρωτήσας ἔχεις;

ΑΓ. Τόλμησον εἰπεῖν, εἰ φρονεῖς, ὅ σ’ ἱστορῶ.
ΛΙ. Πρὸς τὴν κρατοῦσαν Δῃάνειραν, Οἰνέως
κόρην, δάμαρτά θ’ Ἡρακλέους, εἰ μὴ κυρῶ
λεύσσων μάταια, δεσπότιν τε τὴν ἐμήν.

ΑΓ. Τοῦτ’ αὖτ’ ἔχρῃζον, τοῦτό σου μαθεῖν· λέγεις
δέσποιναν εἶναι τήνδε σήν;

ΛΙ. Δίκαια γάρ.

ΑΓ. Τί δῆτα; ποίαν ἀξιοῖς δοῦναι δίκην,
ἥν γ’ εὑρεθῇς ἐς τήνδε μὴ δίκαιος ὤν;

ΛΙ. Πῶς μὴ δίκαιος; τί ποτε ποικίλας ἔχεις;

ΑΓ. Οὐδέν· σὺ μέντοι κάρτα τοῦτο δρῶν κυρεῖς.

ΛΙ. Ἄπειμι· μῶρος δ’ ἦ πάλαι κλύων σέθεν.

ΑΓ. Οὔ, πρίν γ’ ἂν εἴπῃς ἱστορούμενος βραχύ.

ΛΙ. Λέγ’, εἴ τι χρῄζεις· καὶ γὰρ οὐ σιγηλὸς εἶ.

ΑΓ. Τὴν αἰχμάλωτον, ἣν ἔπεμψας ἐς δόμους,
κάτοισθα δήπου;

ΛΙ. Φημί, πρὸς τί δ’ ἱστορεῖς;

ΑΓ. Οὔκουν σὺ ταύτην, ἣν ὑπ’ ἀγνοίας ὁρᾷς,
Ἰόλην ἔφασκες Εὐρύτου σπορὰν ἄγειν;

ΛΙ. Ποίοις ἐν ἀνθρώποισι; τίς πόθεν μολὼν
σοὶ μαρτυρήσει ταῦτ’ ἐμοῦ κλύειν παρών;

ΑΓ. Πολλοῖσιν ἀστῶν· ἐν μέσῃ Τραχινίων
ἀγορᾷ πολύς σου ταῦτά γ’ εἰσήκουσ’ ὄχλος.
ΛΙ. Ναί,
κλύειν γ’ ἔφασκον· ταὐτὸ δ’ οὐχὶ γίγνεται
δόκησιν εἰπεῖν κἀξακριβῶσαι λόγον.

ΑΓ. Ποίαν δόκησιν; οὐκ ἐπώμοτος λέγων
δάμαρτ’ ἔφασκες Ἡρακλεῖ ταύτην ἄγειν;

ΛΙ. Ἐγὼ δάμαρτα; Πρὸς θεῶν, φράσον, φίλη
δέσποινα, τόνδε τίς ποτ’ ἐστὶν ὁ ξένος.

ΑΓ. Ὃς σοῦ παρὼν ἤκουσεν ὡς ταύτης πόθῳ
πόλις δαμείη πᾶσα, κοὐχ ἡ Λυδία
πέρσειεν αὐτήν, ἀλλ’ ὁ τῆσδ’ ἔρως φανείς.

ΛΙ. Ἄνθρωπος, ὦ δέσποιν’, ἀποστήτω. Τὸ γὰρ
νοσοῦντι ληρεῖν ἀνδρὸς οὐχὶ σώφρονος.

ΔΗ. Μή, πρός σε τοῦ κατ’ ἄκρον Οἰταῖον νάπος
Διὸς καταστράπτοντος, ἐκκλέψῃς λόγον.

Οὐ γὰρ γυναικὶ τοὺς λόγους ἐρεῖς κακῇ,
οὐδ’ ἥτις οὐ κάτοιδε τἀνθρώπων ὅτι
440 χαίρειν πέφυκεν οὐχὶ τοῖς αὐτοῖς ἀεί.
Ἔρωτι μὲν γοῦν ὅστις ἀντανίσταται
πύκτης ὅπως ἐς χεῖρας οὐ καλῶς φρονεῖ.
Οὗτος γὰρ ἄρχει καὶ θεῶν ὅπως θέλει,
κἀμοῦ γε· πῶς δ’ οὐ χἀτέρας οἵας γ’ ἐμοῦ.
445 Ὥστ’ εἴ τι τὠμῷ τ’ ἀνδρὶ τῇδε τῇ νόσῳ
ληφθέντι μεμπτός εἰμι, κάρτα μαίνομαι,
ἢ τῇδε τῇ γυναικί, τῇ μεταιτίᾳ
τοῦ μηδὲν αἰσχροῦ μηδ’ ἐμοὶ κακοῦ τινος.
Οὐκ ἔστι ταῦτ’. Ἀλλ’ εἰ μὲν ἐκ κείνου μαθὼν
450 ψεύδῃ, μάθησιν οὐ καλὴν ἐκμανθάνεις·
εἰ δ’ αὐτὸς αὐτὸν ὧδε παιδεύεις, ὅταν
θέλῃς γενέσθαι χρηστός, ὀφθήσῃ κακός.
Ἀλλ’ εἰπὲ πᾶν τἀληθές· ὡς ἐλευθέρῳ
ψευδεῖ καλεῖσθαι κὴρ πρόσεστιν οὐ καλή.
455 Ὅπως δὲ λήσεις, οὐδὲ τοῦτο γίγνεται·
πολλοὶ γάρ, οἷς εἴρηκας, οἳ φράσουσ’ ἐμοί.
Κεἰ μὲν δέδοικας, οὐ καλῶς ταρβεῖς, ἐπεὶ
τὸ μὴ πυθέσθαι, τοῦτό μ’ ἀλγύνειεν ἄν·
τὸ δ’ εἰδέναι τί δεινόν; οὐχὶ χἀτέρας
460 πλείστας ἀνὴρ εἷς Ἡρακλῆς ἔγημε δή;
κοὔπω τις αὐτῶν ἔκ γ’ ἐμοῦ λόγον κακὸν
ἠνέγκατ’ οὐδ’ ὄνειδος ἥδε τ’ οὐδ’ ἂν εἰ
κάρτ’ ἐντακείη τῷ φιλεῖν, ἐπεί σφ’ ἐγὼ
ᾤκτιρα δὴ μάλιστα προσβλέψασ’, ὅτι
465 τὸ κάλλος αὐτῆς τὸν βίον διώλεσεν,
καὶ γῆν πατρῴαν οὐχ ἑκοῦσα δύσμορος
ἔπερσε κἀδούλωσεν. Ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν
ῥείτω κατ’ οὖρον· σοὶ δ’ ἐγὼ φράζω κακὸν
πρὸς ἄλλον εἶναι, πρὸς δ’ ἔμ’ ἀψευδεῖν ἀεί.
470 ΧΟ. Πείθου λεγούσῃ χρηστά, κοὐ μέμψῃ χρόνῳ
γυναικὶ τῇδε, κἀπ’ ἐμοῦ κτήσῃ χάριν.

ΛΙ. Ἀλλ’, ὦ φίλη δέσποιν’, ἐπεί σε μανθάνω

θνητὴν φρονοῦσαν θνητὰ κοὐκ ἀγνώμονα,
πᾶν σοι φράσω τἀληθὲς οὐδὲ κρύψομαι.
475 Ἔστιν γὰρ οὕτως ὥσπερ οὗτος ἐννέπει·
ταύτης ὁ δεινὸς ἵμερός ποθ' Ἡρακλῆ
διῆλθε, καὶ τῆσδ' οὕνεχ' ἡ πολύφθορος
καθῃρέθη πατρῷος Οἰχαλία δορί.
Καὶ ταῦτα, δεῖ γὰρ καὶ τὸ πρὸς κείνου λέγειν,
480 οὔτ' εἶπε κρύπτειν οὔτ' ἀπηρνήθη ποτέ·
ἀλλ' αὐτός, ὦ δέσποινα, δειμαίνων τὸ σὸν
μὴ στέρνον ἀλγύνοιμι τοῖσδε τοῖς λόγοις,
ἥμαρτον, εἴ τι τήνδ' ἁμαρτίαν νέμεις.
Ἐπεί γε μὲν δὴ πάντ' ἐπίστασαι λόγον
485 κείνου τε καὶ σὴν ἐξ ἴσου κοινὴν χάριν,
καὶ στέργε τὴν γυναῖκα καὶ βούλου λόγους
οὓς εἶπας ἐς τήνδ' ἐμπέδως εἰρηκέναι·
ὡς τἄλλ' ἐκεῖνος πάντ' ἀριστεύων χεροῖν
τοῦ τῆσδ' ἔρωτος εἰς ἄπανθ' ἥσσων ἔφυ.
490 ΔΗ. Ἀλλ' ὧδε καὶ φρονοῦμεν ὥστε ταῦτα δρᾶν,
κοὔτοι νόσον γ' ἐπακτὸν ἐξαρούμεθα
θεοῖσι δυσμαχοῦντες. Ἀλλ' εἴσω στέγης
χωρῶμεν, ὡς λόγων τ' ἐπιστολὰς φέρῃς,
ἅ τ' ἀντὶ δώρων δῶρα χρὴ προσαρμόσαι,
495 καὶ ταῦτ' ἄγῃς. Κενὸν γὰρ οὐ δίκαιά σε
χωρεῖν προσελθόνθ' ὧδε σὺν πολλῷ στόλῳ.

ΧΟ. Μέγα τι σθένος ἁ Κύπρις ἐκφέρεται νίκας ἀεί· Str.
καὶ τὰ μὲν θεῶν
500 παρέβαν, καὶ ὅπως Κρονίδαν ἀπάτασεν οὐ λέγω,
οὐδὲ τὸν ἔννυχον Ἅιδαν,
ἢ Ποσειδάωνα τινάκτορα γαίας·
ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τάνδ' ἄρ' ἄκοιτιν
‹τίνες› ἀμφίγυοι κατέβαν πρὸ γάμων;
505 τίνες πάμπληκτα παγκόνιτά τ' ἐξ-
ῆλθον ἄεθλ' ἀγώνων;
Ὁ μὲν ἦν ποταμοῦ σθένος, ὑψίκερω τετραόρου Ant.
φάσμα ταύρου,

Ἀχελῷος ἀπ’ Οἰνιαδᾶν, ὁ δὲ Βακχίας ἄπο
ἦλθε παλίντονα Θήβας
τόξα καὶ λόγχας ῥόπαλόν τε τινάσσων,
παῖς Διός· οἳ τότ’ ἀολλεῖς
ἴσαν ἐς μέσον ἰέμενοι λεχέων·
μόνα δ’ εὔλεκτρος ἐν μέσῳ Κύπρις
ῥαβδονόμει ξυνοῦσα.
Τότ’ ἦν χερός, ἦν δὲ τόξων πάταγος, Epod.
ταυρείων τ’ ἀνάμιγδα κεράτων·
ἦν δ’ ἀμφίπλεκτοι κλίμακες,
ἦν δὲ μετώπων ὀλόεντα πλήγματα
καὶ στόνος ἀμφοῖν.
Ἀ δ’ εὐῶπις ἁβρὰ
τηλαυγεῖ παρ’ ὄχθῳ
ἧστο, τὸν ὃν προσμένουσ’ ἀκοίταν.
Ἐγὼ δὲ θατὴρ μὲν οἷα φράζω·
τὸ δ’ ἀμφινείκητον ὄμμα νύμφας
ἐλεινὸν ἀμμένει·
κἀπὸ ματρὸς ἄφαρ βέβαχ’
ὥστε πόρτις ἐρήμα.

ΔΗ. Ἦμος, φίλαι, κατ’ οἶκον ὁ ξένος θροεῖ
ταῖς αἰχμαλώτοις παισὶν ὡς ἐπ’ ἐξόδῳ,
τῆμος θυραῖος ἦλθον ὡς ὑμᾶς λάθρᾳ,
τὰ μὲν φράσουσα χερσὶν ἀτεχνησάμην,
τὰ δ’ οἷα πάσχω συγκατοικτιουμένη.
Κόρην γάρ, οἶμαι δ’ οὐκέτ’, ἀλλ’ ἐζευγμένην,
παρεισδέδεγμαι, φόρτον ὥστε ναυτίλος,
λωβητὸν ἐμπόλημα τῆς ἐμῆς φρενός·
καὶ νῦν δύ’ οὖσαι μίμνομεν μιᾶς ὑπὸ
χλαίνης ὑπαγκάλισμα· τοιάδ’ Ἡρακλῆς,
ὁ πιστὸς ἡμῖν κἀγαθὸς καλούμενος,
οἰκούρι’ ἀντέπεμψε τοῦ μακροῦ χρόνου.
Ἐγὼ δὲ θυμοῦσθαι μὲν οὐκ ἐπίσταμαι
νοσοῦντι κείνῳ πολλὰ τῇδε τῇ νόσῳ·
τὸ δ’ αὖ ξυνοικεῖν τῇδ’ ὁμοῦ τίς ἂν γυνὴ

δύναιτο, κοινωνοῦσα τῶν αὐτῶν γάμων;
Ὁρῶ γὰρ ἥβην τὴν μὲν ἕρπουσαν πρόσω,
τὴν δὲ φθίνουσαν· ὧν ἀφαρπάζειν φιλεῖ
ὀφθαλμὸς ἄνθος, τῶν δ’ ὑπεκτρέπει πόδα·
550 ταῦτ’ οὖν φοβοῦμαι μὴ πόσις μὲν Ἡρακλῆς
ἐμὸς καλῆται, τῆς νεωτέρας δ’ ἀνήρ.
Ἀλλ’ οὐ γάρ, ὥσπερ εἶπον, ὀργαίνειν καλὸν
γυναῖκα νοῦν ἔχουσαν· ᾗ δ’ ἔχω, φίλαι,
λυτήριον λώφημα, τῇδ’ ὑμῖν φράσω.
555 Ἦν μοι παλαιὸν δῶρον ἀρχαίου ποτὲ
θηρός, λέβητι χαλκέῳ κεκρυμμένον,
ὃ παῖς ἔτ’ οὖσα τοῦ δασυστέρνου παρὰ
Νέσσου φθίνοντος ἐκ φονῶν ἀνειλόμην,
ὃς τὸν βαθύρρουν ποταμὸν Εὔηνον βροτοὺς
560 μισθοῦ πόρευε χερσίν, οὔτε πομπίμοις
κώπαις ἐρέσσων οὔτε λαίφεσιν νεώς.
Ὃς κἀμέ, τὸν πατρῷον ἡνίκα στόλον
ξὺν Ἡρακλεῖ τὸ πρῶτον εὖνις ἐσπόμην,
φέρων ἐπ’ ὤμοις, ἡνίκ’ ἦν μέσῳ πόρῳ,
565 ψαύει ματαίαις χερσίν· ἐκ δ’ ἤϋσ’ ἐγώ,
χὠ Ζηνὸς εὐθὺς παῖς ἐπιστρέψας χεροῖν
ἦκεν κομήτην ἰόν· ἐς δὲ πλεύμονας
στέρνων διερροίζησεν· ἐκθνῄσκων δ’ ὁ θὴρ
τοσοῦτον εἶπε· “Παῖ γέροντος Οἰνέως,
570 τοσόνδ’ ὀνήσῃ τῶν ἐμῶν, ἐὰν πίθῃ,
πορθμῶν, ὀθούνεχ’ ὑστάτην σ’ ἔπεμψ’ ἐγώ·
ἐὰν γὰρ ἀμφίθρεπτον αἷμα τῶν ἐμῶν
σφαγῶν ἐνέγκῃ χερσὶν ᾗ μελαγχόλους
ἔβαψεν ἰοὺς θρέμμα Λερναίας ὕδρας,
575 ἔσται φρενός σοι τοῦτο κηλητήριον
τῆς Ἡρακλείας, ὥστε μήτιν’ εἰσιδὼν
στέρξει γυναῖκα κεῖνος ἀντὶ σοῦ πλέον.”
Τοῦτ’ ἐννοήσασ’, ὦ φίλαι, δόμοις γὰρ ἦν
κείνου θανόντος ἐγκεκλῃμένον καλῶς,
580 χιτῶνα τόνδ’ ἔβαψα, προσβαλοῦσ’ ὅσα
ζῶν κεῖνος εἶπε· καὶ πεπείρανται τάδε.
Κακὰς δὲ τόλμας μήτ’ ἐπισταίμην ἐγὼ
μήτ’ ἐκμάθοιμι, τάς τε τολμώσας στυγῶ.
Φίλτροις δ’ ἐάν πως τήνδ’ ὑπερβαλώμεθα

τὴν παῖδα καὶ θέλκτροισι τοῖς ἐφ᾽ Ἡρακλεῖ,
μεμηχάνηται τοὔργον, εἴ τι μὴ δοκῶ
πράσσειν μάταιον· εἰ δὲ μή, πεπαύσομαι.

ΧΟ. Ἀλλ᾽ εἴ τις ἐστὶ πίστις ἐν τοῖς δρωμένοις,
δοκεῖς παρ᾽ ἡμῖν οὐ βεβουλεῦσθαι κακῶς.
ΔΗ. Οὕτως ἔχει γ᾽ ἡ πίστις, ὡς τὸ μὲν δοκεῖν
ἔνεστι, πείρᾳ δ᾽ οὐ προσωμίλησά πω.

ΧΟ. Ἀλλ᾽ εἰδέναι χρὴ δρῶσαν, ὡς οὐδ᾽ εἰ δοκεῖς
ἔχειν ἔχοις ἂν γνῶμα, μὴ πειρωμένη.

ΔΗ. Ἀλλ᾽ αὐτίκ᾽ εἰσόμεσθα, τόνδε γὰρ βλέπω
θυραῖον ἤδη· διὰ τάχους δ᾽ ἐλεύσεται.
Μόνον παρ᾽ ὑμῶν εὖ στεγοίμεθ᾽· ὡς σκότῳ
κἂν αἰσχρὰ πράσσῃς, οὔποτ᾽ αἰσχύνῃ πεσῇ.

ΛΙ. Τί χρὴ ποεῖν; σήμαινε, τέκνον Οἰνέως,
ὡς ἐσμὲν ἤδη τῷ μακρῷ χρόνῳ βραδεῖς.
ΔΗ. Ἀλλ᾽ αὐτὰ δή σοι ταῦτα καὶ πράσσω, Λίχα,
ἕως σὺ ταῖς ἔσωθεν ἡγορῶ ξέναις,
ὅπως φέρῃς μοι τόνδε ταναϋφῆ πέπλον
δώρημ᾽ ἐκείνῳ τἀνδρὶ τῆς ἐμῆς χερός.
Διδοὺς δὲ τόνδε φράζ᾽ ὅπως μηδεὶς βροτῶν
κείνου πάροιθεν ἀμφιδύσεται χροΐ,
μηδ᾽ ὄψεταί νιν μήτε φέγγος ἡλίου
μήθ᾽ ἕρκος ἱερὸν μήτ᾽ ἐφέστιον σέλας,
πρὶν κεῖνος αὐτὸν φανερὸς ἐμφανῶς σταθεὶς
δείξῃ θεοῖσιν ἡμέρᾳ ταυροσφάγῳ.

Οὕτω γὰρ ηὔγμην, εἴ ποτ’ αὐτὸν ἐς δόμους
ἴδοιμι σωθέντ’ ἢ κλύοιμι πανδίκως,
στελεῖν χιτῶνι τῷδε καὶ φανεῖν θεοῖς
θυτῆρα καινῷ καινὸν ἐν πεπλώματι.
Καὶ τῶνδ’ ἀποίσεις σῆμ’, ὃ κεῖνος εὐμαθὲς
σφραγῖδος ἔρκει τῷδ’ ἐπὸν μαθήσεται.
Ἀλλ’ ἕρπε καὶ φύλασσε πρῶτα μὲν νόμον,
τὸ μὴ ‘πιθυμεῖν πομπὸς ὢν περισσὰ δρᾶν·
ἔπειθ’ ὅπως ἂν ἡ χάρις κείνου τέ σοι
κἀμοῦ ξυνελθοῦσ’ ἐξ ἁπλῆς διπλῆ φανῇ.
ΛΙ. Ἀλλ’ εἴπερ Ἑρμοῦ τήνδε πομπεύω τέχνην
βέβαιον, οὔ τοι μὴ σφαλῶ γ’ ἐν σοί ποτε,
τὸ μὴ οὐ τόδ’ ἄγγος ὡς ἔχει δεῖξαι φέρων
λόγων τε πίστιν ὧν ἔχεις ἐφαρμόσαι.

ΔΗ. Στείχοις ἂν ἤδη· καὶ γὰρ ἐξεπίστασαι
τά γ’ ἐν δόμοισιν ὡς ἔχοντα τυγχάνει.

ΛΙ. Ἐπίσταμαί τε καὶ φράσω σεσωσμένα.

ΔΗ. Ἀλλ’ οἶσθα μὲν δὴ καὶ τὰ τῆς ξένης ὁρῶν
προσδέγματ’, αὐτὴν ὡς ἐδεξάμην φίλως.

ΛΙ. Ὥστ’ ἐκπλαγῆναι τοὐμὸν ἡδονῇ κέαρ.
ΔΗ. Τί δῆτ’ ἂν ἄλλο γ’ ἐννέποις; δέδοικα γὰρ
μὴ πρῷ λέγοις ἂν τὸν πόθον τὸν ἐξ ἐμοῦ,
πρὶν εἰδέναι τἀκεῖθεν εἰ ποθούμεθα.

ΧΟ. Ὦ ναύλοχα καὶ πετραῖα Str. 1 .
θερμὰ λουτρὰ καὶ πάγους
Οἴτας παραναιετάοντες,
οἵ τε μέσσαν Μηλίδα πὰρ λίμναν,
χρυσαλακάτου τ’ ἀκτὰν Κόρας,
ἔνθ’ Ἑλλάνων ἀγοραὶ
Πυλάτιδες κλέονται,
ὁ καλλιβόας τάχ’ ὑμῖν Ant. 1 .
αὐλὸς οὐκ ἀναρσίαν
ἀχῶν καναχὰν ἐπάνεισιν,
ἀλλὰ θείας ἀντίλυρον μούσας.
Ὁ γὰρ Διός, Ἀλκμήνας κόρος,
σεῦται πάσας ἀρετᾶς
λάφυρ’ ἔχων ἐπ’ οἴκους·
ὃν ἀπόπτολιν εἴχομεν παντᾶ Str. 2 .
δυοκαιδεκάμηνον ἀμμένουσαι
χρόνον, πελάγιον, ἴδριες οὐ-
δέν· ἀ δέ οἱ φίλα δάμαρ
τάλαινα‹ν› δυστάλαινα καρδίαν
πάγκλαυτος αἰὲν ὤλλυτο·
νῦν δ’ Ἄρης οἰστρηθεὶς ἐξέλυσ’
ἐπιπόνων ἀμερᾶν.
Ἀφίκοιτ’ ἀφίκοιτο· μὴ σταίη Ant. 2 .
πολύκωπον ὄχημα ναὸς αὐτῷ,
πρὶν τάνδε πρὸς πόλιν ἀνύσει-
ε, νασιῶτιν ἑστίαν
ἀμείψας, ἔνθα κλῄζεται θυτήρ·
ὅθεν μόλοι πανίμερος,
τῷ Πειθοῦς παγχρίστῳ συγκραθεὶς
ἐπὶ προφάνσει θηρός.

ΔΗ. Γυναῖκες, ὡς δέδοικα μὴ περαιτέρω
πεπραγμέν’ ᾖ μοι πάνθ’ ὅσ’ ἀρτίως ἔδρων.
ΧΟ. Τί δ’ ἔστι, Δῃάνειρα, τέκνον Οἰνέως;

ΔΗ. Οὐκ οἶδ’· ἀθυμῶ δ’ εἰ φανήσομαι τάχα
κακὸν μέγ’ ἐκπράξασ’ ἀπ’ ἐλπίδος καλῆς.

ΧΟ. Οὐ δή τι τῶν σῶν Ἡρακλεῖ δωρημάτων;

ΔΗ. Μάλιστά γ’· ὥστε μήποτ’ ἂν προθυμίαν
670 ἄδηλον ἔργου τῳ παραινέσαι λαβεῖν.

ΧΟ. Δίδαξον, εἰ διδακτόν, ἐξ ὅτου φοβῇ.

ΔΗ. Τοιοῦτον ἐκβέβηκεν οἷον, ἢν φράσω,
γυναῖκες, ὑμῖν, θαῦμ’ ἀνέλπιστον μαθεῖν.
Ὧι γὰρ τὸν ἐνδυτῆρα πέπλον ἀρτίως
675 ἔχριον ἀργῆτ’, οἰὸς εὐείρῳ πόκῳ,
τοῦτ’ ἠφάνισται διάβορον πρὸς οὐδενὸς.
τῶν ἔνδον, ἀλλ’ ἐδεστὸν ἐξ αὐτοῦ φθίνει,
καὶ ψῇ κατ’ ἄκρας σπιλάδος· ὡς δ’ εἰδῇς ἅπαν
ᾗ τοῦτ’ ἐπράχθη, μείζον’ ἐκτενῶ λόγον.
680 Ἐγὼ γὰρ ὢν ὁ θήρ με Κένταυρος πονῶν
πλευρὰν πικρᾷ γλωχῖνι προὐδιδάξατο,
παρῆκα θεσμῶν οὐδέν, ἀλλ’ ἐσῳζόμην,
χαλκῆς ὅπως δύσνιπτον ἐκ δέλτου γραφήν.
Καί μοι τάδ’ ἦν πρόρρητα καὶ τοιαῦτ’ ἔδρων·
685 τὸ φάρμακον τοῦτ’ ἄπυρον ἀκτῖνός τ’ ἀεὶ
θερμῆς ἄθικτον ἐν μυχοῖς σῴζειν ἐμέ,
ἕως νιν ἀρτίχριστον ἁρμόσαιμί που.
Κἄδρων τοιαῦτα· νῦν δ’, ὅτ’ ἦν ἐργαστέον,
ἔχρισα μὲν κατ’ οἶκον ἐν δόμοις κρυφῇ

μαλλῷ, σπάσασα κτησίου βοτοῦ λάχνην,
κἄθηκα συμπτύξασ’ ἀλαμπὲς ἡλίου
κοίλῳ ζυγάστρῳ δῶρον, ὥσπερ εἴδετε.
Εἴσω δ’ ἀποστείχουσα δέρκομαι φάτιν
ἄφραστον, ἀξύμβλητον ἀνθρώπῳ μαθεῖν.
Τὸ γὰρ κάταγμα τυγχάνω ῥίψασά πως
τῆς οἰὸς ᾧ προὔχριον ἐς μέσην φλόγα,
ἀκτῖν’ ἐς ἡλιῶτιν· ὡς δ’ ἐθάλπετο,
ῥεῖ πᾶν ἄδηλον καὶ κατέψηκται χθονί,
μορφῇ μάλιστ’ εἰκαστὸν ὥστε πρίονος
ἐκβρώματ’ ἂν βλέψειας ἐν τομῇ ξύλου.
Τοιόνδε κεῖται προπετές· ἐκ δὲ γῆς ὅθεν
προὔκειτ’ ἀναζέουσι θρομβώδεις ἀφροί,
γλαυκῆς ὀπώρας ὥστε πίονος ποτοῦ
χυθέντος εἰς γῆν Βακχίας ἀπ’ ἀμπέλου.
Ὥστ’ οὐκ ἔχω τάλαινα ποῖ γνώμης πέσω,
ὁρῶ δ’ ἔμ’ ἔργον δεινὸν ἐξειργασμένην.
Πόθεν γὰρ ἄν ποτ’, ἀντὶ τοῦ θνήσκων ὁ θὴρ
ἐμοὶ παρέσχ’ εὔνοιαν, ἧς ἔθνῃσχ’ ὕπερ;
οὐκ ἔστιν· ἀλλὰ τὸν βαλόντ’ ἀποφθίσαι
χρῄζων ἔθελγέ μ’· ὧν ἐγὼ μεθύστερον,
ὅτ’ οὐκέτ’ ἀρκεῖ, τὴν μάθησιν ἄρνυμαι.
Μόνη γὰρ αὐτόν, εἴ τι μὴ ψευσθήσομαι
γνώμης, ἐγὼ δύστηνος ἐξαποφθερῶ·
τὸν γὰρ βαλόντ’ ἄτρακτον οἶδα καὶ θεόν,
Χείρωνα πημήναντα, χὤνπερ ἂν θίγῃ
φθείρει τὰ πάντα κνώδαλ’· ἐκ δὲ τοῦδ’ ὅδε
σφαγῶν διελθὼν ἰὸς αἵματος μέλας
πῶς οὐκ ὀλεῖ καὶ τόνδε; δόξῃ γοῦν ἐμῇ.
Καίτοι δέδοκται, κεῖνος εἰ σφαλήσεται,
ταὐτῇ σὺν ὁρμῇ κἀμὲ συνθανεῖν ἄμα·
ζῆν γὰρ κακῶς κλύουσαν οὐκ ἀνασχετόν,
ἥτις προτιμᾷ μὴ κακὴ πεφυκέναι.

ΧΟ. Ταρβεῖν μὲν ἔργα δείν’ ἀναγκαίως ἔχει,
τὴν δ’ ἐλπίδ’ οὐ χρὴ τῆς τύχης κρίνειν πάρος.

ΔΗ. Οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν τοῖς μὴ καλοῖς βουλεύμασιν
οὐδ’ ἐλπὶς ἥτις καὶ θράσος τι προξενεῖ.

ΧΟ. Ἀλλ’ ἀμφὶ τοῖς σφαλεῖσι μὴ ‘ξ ἑκουσίας
ὀργὴ πέπειρα, τῆς σε τυγχάνειν πρέπει.

ΔΗ. Τοιαῦτα δ’ ἂν λέξειεν οὐχ ὁ τοῦ κακοῦ
κοινωνός, ἀλλ’ ᾧ μηδέν ἐστ’ οἴκοι βαρύ.

ΧΟ. Σιγᾶν ἂν ἁρμόζοι σε τὸν πλείω λόγον,
εἰ μή τι λέξεις παιδὶ τῷ σαυτῆς· ἐπεὶ
πάρεστι μαστὴρ πατρὸς ὃς πρὶν ᾤχετο.

ΥΛ. Ὦ μῆτερ, ὡς ἂν ἐκ τριῶν σ’ ἓν εἰλόμην,
ἢ μηκέτ’ εἶναι ζῶσαν, ἢ σεσωσμένην
ἄλλου κεκλῆσθαι μητέρ’, ἢ λῴους φρένας
τῶν νῦν παρουσῶν τῶνδ’ ἀμείψασθαί ποθεν.

ΔΗ. Τί δ’ ἐστίν, ὦ παῖ, πρός γ’ ἐμοῦ στυγούμενον;

ΥΛ. Τὸν ἄνδρα τὸν σὸν ἴσθι, τὸν δ’ ἐμὸν λέγω
πατέρα, κατακτείνασα τῇδ’ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ.

ΔΗ. Οἴμοι, τίν’ ἐξήνεγκας, ὦ τέκνον, λόγον;

ΥΛ. Ὃν οὐχ οἷόν τε μὴ τελεσθῆναι· τὸ γὰρ
φανθὲν τίς ἂν δύναιτ’ ‹ἂν› ἀγένητον ποεῖν;

ΔΗ. Πῶς εἶπας, ὦ παῖ; τοῦ πάρ’ ἀνθρώπων μαθὼν
745 ἄζηλον οὕτως ἔργον εἰργάσθαι με φῄς;

ΥΛ. Αὐτὸς βαρεῖαν ξυμφορὰν ἐν ὄμμασιν
πατρὸς δεδορκὼς κοὐ κατὰ γλῶσσαν κλύων.

ΔΗ. Ποῦ δ’ ἐμπελάζεις τἀνδρὶ καὶ παρίστασαι;

ΥΛ. Εἰ χρὴ μαθεῖν σε, πάντα δὴ φωνεῖν χρεών.
750 Ὅθ’ εἶρπε κλεινὴν Εὐρύτου πέρσας πόλιν,
νίκης ἄγων τροπαῖα κἀκροθίνια,
ἀκτή τις ἀμφίκλυστος Εὐβοίας ἄκρον
Κήναιον ἔστιν, ἔνθα πατρῴῳ Διὶ
βωμοὺς ὁρίζει τεμενίαν τε φυλλάδα·
755 οὗ νιν τὰ πρῶτ’ ἐσεῖδον ἄσμενος πόθῳ.
Μέλλοντι δ’ αὐτῷ πολυθύτους τεύχειν σφαγὰς
κῆρυξ ἀπ’ οἴκων ἵκετ’ οἰκεῖος Λίχας,
τὸ σὸν φέρων δώρημα, θανάσιμον πέπλον·
ὃν κεῖνος ἐνδύς, ὡς σὺ προὐξεφίεσο,
760 ταυροκτονεῖ μὲν δώδεκ’ ἐντελεῖς ἔχων
λείας ἀπαρχὴν βοῦς· ἀτὰρ τὰ πάνθ’ ὁμοῦ
ἑκατὸν προσῆγε συμμιγῆ βοσκήματα.

Καὶ πρῶτα μὲν δείλαιος ἵλεῳ φρενὶ
κόσμῳ τε χαίρων καὶ στολῇ κατηύχετο·
ὅπως δὲ σεμνῶν ὀργίων ἐδαίετο
φλὸξ αἱματηρὰ κἀπὸ πιείρας δρυός,
ἱδρὼς ἀνῄει χρωτὶ καὶ προσπτύσσετο
πλευραῖσιν ἀρτίκολλος, ὥστε τέκτονος,
χιτὼν ἅπαν κατ’ ἄρθρον· ἦλθε δ’ ὀστέων
ὀδαγμὸς ἀντίσπαστος· εἶτα φοινίας
ἐχθρᾶς ἐχίδνης ἰὸς ὣς ἐδαίνυτο.
Ἐνταῦθα δὴ βόησε τὸν δυσδαίμονα
Λίχαν, τὸν οὐδὲν αἴτιον τοῦ σοῦ κακοῦ,
ποίαις ἐνέγκοι τόνδε μηχαναῖς πέπλον·
ὁ δ’ οὐδὲν εἰδὼς δύσμορος τὸ σὸν μόνης
δώρημ’ ἔλεξεν, ὥσπερ ἦν ἐσταλμένον.
Κἀκεῖνος ὡς ἤκουσε καὶ διώδυνος
σπαραγμὸς αὐτοῦ πλευμόνων ἀνθήψατο,
μάρψας ποδός νιν ἄρθρον ᾗ λυγίζεται
ῥιπτεῖ πρὸς ἀμφίκλυστον ἐκ πόντου πέτραν·
κόμης δὲ λευκὸν μυελὸν ἐκραίνει, μέσου
κρατὸς διασπαρέντος αἵματός θ’ ὁμοῦ.
Ἅπας δ’ ἀνηυφήμησεν οἰμωγῇ λεώς,
τοῦ μὲν νοσοῦντος, τοῦ δὲ διαπεπραγμένου·
κοὐδεὶς ἐτόλμα τἀνδρὸς ἀντίον μολεῖν.
Ἐσπᾶτο γὰρ πέδονδε καὶ μετάρσιος
βοῶν, ἰύζων· ἀμφὶ δ’ ἐκτύπουν πέτραι,
Λοκρῶν ὄρειοι πρῶνες Εὐβοίας τ’ ἄκραι.
Ἐπεὶ δ’ ἀπεῖπε, πολλὰ μὲν τάλας χθονὶ
ῥιπτῶν ἑαυτόν, πολλὰ δ’ οἰμωγῇ βοῶν,
τὸ δυσπάρευνον λέκτρον ἐνδατούμενος
σοῦ τῆς ταλαίνης, καὶ τὸν Οἰνέως γάμον
οἷον κατακτήσαιτο λυμαντὴν βίου,
τότ’ ἐκ προσέδρου λιγνύος διάστροφον
ὀφθαλμὸν ἄρας εἶδέ μ’ ἐν πολλῷ στρατῷ
δακρυρροοῦντα, καί με προσβλέψας καλεῖ·
“Ὦ παῖ, πρόσελθε, μὴ φύγῃς τοὐμὸν κακόν,
μηδ’ εἴ σε χρὴ θανόντι συνθανεῖν ἐμοί·
ἀλλ’ ἆρον ἔξω, καὶ μάλιστα μέν με θὲς
ἐνταῦθ’ ὅπου με μή τις ὄψεται βροτῶν·
εἰ δ’ οἶκτον ἴσχεις, ἀλλά μ’ ἔκ γε τῆσδε γῆς

πόρθμευσον ὡς τάχιστα, μηδ’ αὐτοῦ θάνω.”
Τοσαῦτ’ ἐπισκήψαντος, ἐν μέσῳ σκάφει
θέντες σφε πρὸς γῆν τήνδ’ ἐκέλσαμεν μόλις
805 βρυχώμενον σπασμοῖσι· καί νιν αὐτίκα
ἢ ζῶντ’ ἐσόψεσθ’ ἢ τεθνηκότ’ ἀρτίως.
Τοιαῦτα, μῆτερ, πατρὶ βουλεύσασ’ ἐμῷ
καὶ δρῶσ’ ἐλήφθης, ὧν σε ποίνιμος Δίκη
τείσαιτ’ Ἐρινύς τ’· εἰ θέμις δ’, ἐπεύχομαι·
810 θέμις δ’, ἐπεί μοι τὴν θέμιν σὺ προὔβαλες,
πάντων ἄριστον ἄνδρα τῶν ἐπὶ χθονὶ
κτείνασ’, ὁποῖον ἄλλον οὐκ ὄψει ποτέ.

ΧΟ. Τί σῖγ’ ἀφέρπεις; οὐ κάτοισθ’ ὀθούνεκα
ξυνηγορεῖς σιγῶσα τῷ κατηγόρῳ;
815 ΥΛ. Ἐᾶτ’ ἀφέρπειν· οὖρος ὀφθαλμῶν ἐμῶν
αὐτῇ γένοιτ’ ἄπωθεν ἑρπούσῃ καλῶς·
ὄγκον γὰρ ἄλλως ὀνόματος τί δεῖ τρέφειν
μητρῷον, ἥτις μηδὲν ὡς τεκοῦσα δρᾷ;
Ἀλλ’ ἑρπέτω χαίρουσα· τὴν δὲ τέρψιν ἣν
820 τὠμῷ δίδωσι πατρί, τήνδ’ αὐτὴ λάβοι.

ΧΟ. Ἴδ’ οἷον, ὦ παῖδες, προσέμειξεν ἄφαρ Str. 1 .
τοὔπος τὸ θεοπρόπον ἡμῖν
τᾶς παλαιφάτου προνοίας,
ὅ τ’ ἔλακεν, ὁπότε τελεόμηνος ἐκφέροι
825 δωδέκατος ἄροτος, ἀναδοχὰν τελεῖν πόνων
τῷ Διὸς αὐτόπαιδι·
καὶ τάδ’ ὀρθῶς ἔμπεδα
κατουρίζει. Πῶς γὰρ ἂν ὁ μὴ λεύσσων
830 ἔτι ποτ’ ἔτ’ ἐπίπονον ἔχοι θανὼν λατρείαν;
Εἰ γάρ σφε Κενταύρου φονίᾳ νεφέλᾳ Ant. 1 .
χρίει δολοποιὸς ἀνάγκα
πλευρά, προστακέντος ἰοῦ,
ὃν τέκετο θάνατος, ἔτρεφε δ’ αἰόλος δράκων,

πῶς ὅδ’ ἂν ἀέλιον ἕτερον ἢ τανῦν ἴδοι,
δεινοτάτῳ μὲν ὕδρας
προστετακὼς φάσματι,
μελαγχαίτα τ’ ἄμμιγά νιν αἰκίζει
φόνια δολιόμυθα κέντρ’ ἐπιζέσαντα;
Ὧν ἄδ’ ἀ τλάμων ἄοκνος Str. 2 .
μεγάλαν προσορῶσα δόμοις βλάβαν
νέων ἀϊσσόντων γάμων, τὰ μὲν οὔτι
προσέβαλεν, τὰ δ’ ἀπ’ ἀλλόθρου
γνώμας μολόντ’ ὀλεθρίαισ‹ι› συναλλαγαῖς
ᾗ που ὀλοὰ στένει,
ᾗ που ἀδινῶν χλωρὰν
τέγγει δακρύων ἄχναν.
Ἃ δ’ ἐρχομένα μοῖρα προφαίνει δολί-
αν καὶ μεγάλαν ἄταν.
Ἔρρωγεν παγὰ δακρύων, Ant. 2 .
κέχυται νόσος, ὦ πόποι, οἷον ‹ἐξ›
ἀναρσίων οὔπω ‹ποτ’ ἄνδρ’› ἀγακλειτὸν
ἐπέμολε‹ν› πάθος οἰκτίσαι.
Ἰὼ κελαινὰ λόγχα προμάχου δορός,
ἃ τότε θοὰν νύμφαν
ἄγαγες ἀπ’ αἰπεινᾶς
τάνδ’ Οἰχαλίας αἰχμᾷ.
Ἃ δ’ ἀμφίπολος Κύπρις ἄναυδος φανε-
ρὰ τῶνδ’ ἐφάνη πράκτωρ.

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Α΄
Πότερον ἐγὼ μάταιος, ἢ κλύω τινὸς
οἴκτου δι’ οἴκων ἀρτίως ὁρμωμένου;
Τί φημί·

ΗΜΙΧΟΡΙΟΝ Β΄
Ἠχεῖ τις οὐκ ἄσημον, ἀλλὰ δυστυχῆ
κωκυτὸν εἴσω, καί τι καινίζει στέγη.

ΧΟ. Ξύνες δὲ
τήνδ’ ὡς ἀήθης καὶ συνωφρυωμένη
870 χωρεῖ πρὸς ἡμᾶς γραῖα σημαίνουσά τι.

ΤΡ. Ὦ παῖδες, ὡς ἄρ’ ἡμὶν οὐ σμικρῶν κακῶν
ἦρξεν τὸ δῶρον Ἡρακλεῖ τὸ πόμπιμον.

ΧΟ. Τί δ’, ὦ γεραιά, καινοποιηθὲν λέγεις;

ΤΡ. Βέβηκε Δηάνειρα τὴν πανυστάτην
875 ὁδῶν ἁπασῶν ἐξ ἀκινήτου ποδός.

ΧΟ. Οὐ δή ποθ’ ὡς θανοῦσα;

ΤΡ. Πάντ’ ἀκήκοας.

ΧΟ. Τέθνηκεν ἡ τάλαινα;

ΤΡ. Δεύτερον κλύεις.

ΧΟ. Τάλαιν’ ὀλεθρία, τίνι τρόπῳ θανεῖν σφε φῄς;

ΤΡ. Σχετλιώτατα πρός γε πρᾶξιν.
ΧΟ. Εἰπὲ τῷ μόρῳ, γύναι, ξυντρέχει.

ΤΡ. Αὐτὴν διηίστωσεν.

ΧΟ. Τίς θυμός, ἢ τίνες νόσοι
τάνδ’ αἰχμᾷ βέλεος κακοῦ
ξυνεῖλε; Πῶς ἐμήσατο
πρὸς θανάτῳ θάνατον
ἀνύσασα μόνα;

ΤΡ. Στονόεντος
ἐν τομᾷ σιδάρου.

ΧΟ. Ἐπεῖδες, ὦ ματαία, τάνδ’ ὕβριν;

ΤΡ. Ἐπεῖδον, ὡς δὴ πλησία παραστάτις.
ΧΟ. Τίς ἦν; πῶς; φέρ’ εἰπέ.

ΤΡ. Αὐτὴ πρὸς αὐτῆς χειροποιεῖται τάδε.

ΧΟ. Τί φωνεῖς;

ΤΡ. Σαφηνῆ.

ΧΟ. Ἔτεκεν ἔτεκεν μεγάλαν
ἀ νέορτος ἅδε νύμφα
895 δόμοισι τοῖσδ’ Ἐρινύν.

ΤΡ. Ἄγαν γε· μᾶλλον δ’, εἰ παροῦσα πλησία
ἔλευσσες οἷ’ ἔδρασε, κάρτ’ ἂν ᾤκτισας.

ΧΟ. Καὶ ταῦτ’ ἔτλη τις χεὶρ γυναικεία κτίσαι;

ΤΡ. Δεινῶς γε· πεύσῃ δ’, ὥστε μαρτυρεῖν ἐμοί.
900 Ἐπεὶ παρῆλθε δῳμάτων εἴσω μόνη
καὶ παῖδ’ ἐν αὐλαῖς εἶδε κοῖλα δέμνια
στορνύνθ’, ὅπως ἄψορρον ἀντῴη πατρί,
κρύψασ’ ἑαυτὴν ἔνθα μή τις εἰσίδοι,
βρυχᾶτο μὲν βωμοῖσι προσπίπτουσ’ ὅτι
905 γένοιτ’ ἐρήμη, κλαῖε δ’ ὀργάνων ὅτου
ψαύσειεν οἷς ἐχρῆτο δειλαία πάρος·
ἄλλῃ δὲ κἄλλῃ δωμάτων στρωφωμένη,

εἴ του φίλων βλέψειεν οἰκετῶν δέμας,
ἔκλαιεν ἡ δύστηνος εἰσορωμένη,
ἀὐτὴ τὸν αὐτῆς δαίμον᾽ ἀνακαλουμένη
καὶ τὰς ἄπαιδας ἐς τὸ λοιπὸν οἰκίας.
Ἐπεὶ δὲ τῶνδ᾽ ἔληξεν, ἐξαίφνης σφ᾽ ὁρῶ
τὸν Ἡράκλειον θάλαμον εἰσορμωμένην.
Κἀγὼ λαθραῖον ὄμμ᾽ ἐπεσκιασμένη
φρούρουν· ὁρῶ δὲ τὴν γυναῖκα δεμνίοις
τοῖς Ἡρακλείοις στρωτὰ βάλλουσαν φάρη.
Ὅπως δ᾽ ἐτέλεσε τοῦτ᾽, ἐπενθοροῦσ᾽ ἄνω
καθέζετ᾽ ἐν μέσοισιν εὐνατηρίοις,
καὶ δακρύων ῥήξασα θερμὰ νάματα
ἔλεξεν· “Ὦ λέχη τε καὶ νυμφεῖ᾽ ἐμά,
τὸ λοιπὸν ἤδη χαίρεθ᾽ ὡς ἔμ᾽ οὔποτε
δέξεσθ᾽ ἔτ᾽ ἐν κοίταισι ταῖσδ᾽ εὐνήτριαν.”
Τοσαῦτα φωνήσασα συντόνῳ χερὶ
λύει τὸν αὐτῆς πέπλον ᾧ χρυσήλατος
προὔκειτο μαστῶν περονίς, ἐκ δ᾽ ἐλώπισεν
πλευρὰν ἅπασαν ὠλένην τ᾽ εὐώνυμον.
Κἀγὼ δρομαία βᾶσ᾽, ὅσονπερ ἔσθενον,
τῷ παιδὶ φράζω τῆς τεχνωμένης τάδε.
Κἀν ᾧ τὸ κεῖσε δεῦρό τ᾽ ἐξορμώμεθα,
ὁρῶμεν αὐτὴν ἀμφιπλῆγι φασγάνῳ
πλευρὰν ὑφ᾽ ἧπαρ καὶ φρένας πεπληγμένην.
Ἰδὼν δ᾽ ὁ παῖς ὤμωξεν· ἔγνω γὰρ τάλας
τοὔργον κατ᾽ ὀργὴν ὡς ἐφάψειεν τόδε,
ὅψ᾽ ἐκδιδαχθεὶς τῶν κατ᾽ οἶκον οὕνεκα
ἄκουσα πρὸς τοῦ θηρὸς ἔρξειεν τάδε.
Κἀνταῦθ᾽ ὁ παῖς δύστηνος οὔτ᾽ ὀδυρμάτων
ἐλείπετ᾽ οὐδέν, ἀμφί νιν γοώμενος,
οὔτ᾽ ἀμφιπίπτων στόμασιν, ἀλλὰ πλευρόθεν
πλευρὰν παρεὶς ἔκειτο πόλλ᾽ ἀναστένων,
ὥς νιν ματαίως αἰτίᾳ βάλοι κακῇ,
κλαίων ὀθούνεκ᾽ ἐκ δυοῖν ἔσοιθ᾽ ἅμα
πατρός τ᾽ ἐκείνης τ᾽ ὠρφανισμένος βίον.
Τοιαῦτα τἀνθάδ᾽ ἐστίν· ὥστ᾽ εἴ τις δύο
ἢ καί τι πλείους ἡμέρας λογίζεται,
μάταιός ἐστιν· οὐ γὰρ ἔσθ᾽ ἥ γ᾽ αὔριον,
πρὶν εὖ πάθῃ τις τὴν παροῦσαν ἡμέραν.

ΧΟ. Πότερα πρότερον ἐπιστένω; Str. 1 .
πότερα τέλεα περαιτέρω,
δύσκριτ’ ἔμοιγε δυστάνῳ;
950 Τάδε μὲν ἔχομεν ὁρᾶν δόμοις, Ant. 1 .
τάδε δὲ μένομεν ἐπ’ ἐλπίσιν·
κοινὰ δ’ ἔχειν τε καὶ μέλλειν.
Εἴθ’ ἀνεμόεσσά τις Str. 2 .
γένοιτ’ ἔπουρος ἐστιῶτις αὔρα,
955 ἥτις μ’ ἀποικίσειεν ἐκ τόπων, ὅπως
τὸν Διῖον ἄλκιμον γόνον
μὴ ταρβαλέα θάνοι-
μι μοῦνον εἰσιδοῦσ’ ἄφαρ·
ἐπεὶ ἐν δυσαπαλλάκτοις ὀδύναις
960 χωρεῖν πρὸ δόμων λέγουσιν
ἄσπετόν τι θαῦμα.
Ἀγχοῦ δ’ ἄρα κοὐ μακρὰν Ant. 2 .
προὔκλαιον, ὀξύφωνος ὡς ἀηδών.
Ξένων γὰρ ἐξόμιλος ἥδε τις στάσις·
965 πᾷ δ’ αὖ φορεῖ νιν, ὡς φίλου
προκηδομένα, βαρεῖ-
αν ἄψοφον φέρει βάσιν.
Αἰαῖ, ὅδ’ ἀναύδατος φέρεται.
Τί χρὴ θανόντα νιν ἢ καθ’
970 ὕπνον ὄντα κρῖναι;

ΥΛ. Οἴμοι ἐγὼ σοῦ,
πάτερ, οἴμοι ἐγὼ σοῦ μέλεος.
Τί πάθω; τί δὲ μήσομαι; οἴμοι.

ΠΡΕΣΒΥΣ
Σίγα, τέκνον, μὴ κινήσῃς

ἀγρίαν ὀδύνην πατρὸς ὠμόφρονος·
ζῇ γὰρ προπετής· ἀλλ’ ἴσχε δακὼν
στόμα σόν.

ΥΛ. Πῶς φῄς, γέρον; ἦ ζῇ;

ΠΡ. Οὐ μὴ ‘ξεγερεῖς τὸν ὕπνῳ κάτοχον,
κἀκκινήσεις κἀναστήσεις
φοιτάδα δεινὴν
νόσον, ὦ τέκνον.

ΥΛ. Ἀλλ’ ἐπί μοι μελέῳ
βάρος ἄπλετον· ἐμμέμονε‹ν› φρήν.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
Ὦ Ζεῦ,
ποῖ γᾶς ἥκω; παρὰ τοῖσι βροτῶν
κεῖμαι πεπονημένος ἀλλήκτοις
ὀδύναις; Οἴμοι ‹μοι› ἐγὼ τλάμων·
ἡ δ’ αὖ μιαρὰ βρύκει. Φεῦ.

ΠΡ. Ἆρ’ ἐξῄδησθ’ ὅσον ἦν κέρδος
σιγῇ κεύθειν καὶ μὴ σκεδάσαι
τῷδ’ ἀπὸ κρατὸς
βλεφάρων θ’ ὕπνον;

ΥΛ. Οὐ γὰρ ἔχω πῶς ἂν
στέρξαιμι κακὸν τόδε λεύσσων.

ΗΡ. Ὦ Κηναία κρηπὶς βωμῶν,
ἱερῶν οἵαν οἵων ἐπί μοι
995 μελέῳ χάριν ἠνύσω, ὦ Ζεῦ·
οἵαν μ’ ἄρ’ ἔθου λώβαν, οἵαν·
ἦν μή ποτ’ ἐγὼ προσιδεῖν ὁ τάλας
ὤφελον ὅσσοις, τόδ’ ἀκήλητον
μανίας ἄνθος καταδερχθῆναι.
1000 Τίς γὰρ ἀοιδός, τίς ὁ χειροτέχνης
ἰατορίας, ὃς τήνδ’ ἄτην
χωρὶς Ζηνὸς κατακηλήσει;
θαῦμ’ ἂν πόρρωθεν ἰδοίμην.
Ἒ ἔ, Str.
1005 ἐᾶτέ μ‹ε›, ⏑¯⏑¯, ἐᾶτέ με δύσμορον
ὕστατον εὐνάσαι, ἐᾶτέ με δύστανον.
Πᾶ μου ψαύεις; ποῖ ‹ποῖ› κλίνεις;
Ἀπολεῖς μ’, ἀπολεῖς.
Ἀνατέτροφας ὅ τι καὶ μύσῃ.
1010 Ἥπταί μου, τοτοτοῖ, ἥδ’ αὖθ’ ἕρπει. Πόθεν ἔστ’, ὠ
πάντων Ἑλλάνων ἀδικώτατοι ἀνέρες, οἳς δὴ
πολλὰ μὲν ἐν πόντῳ, κατά τε δρία πάντα καθαίρων
ὠλεκόμαν ὁ τάλας, καὶ νῦν ἐπὶ τῷδε νοσοῦντι
οὐ πῦρ, οὐκ ἔγχος τις ὀνήσιμον οὐκ ἐπιτρέψει;
1015 Ἒ ἔ,
οὐδ’ ἀπαράξαι ‹τις› κρᾶτα βίᾳ θέλει
¯⏑⏑¯⏑¯
¯⏑⏑¯ μολὼν τοῦ στυγεροῦ; Φεῦ φεῦ.

ΠΡ. Ὦ παῖ τοῦδ’ ἀνδρός, τοὔργον τόδε μεῖζον ἀνήκει
ἢ κατ’ ἐμὰν ῥώμαν· σὺ δὲ σύλλαβε· σοί τε γὰρ ἄμμα
1020 ἓν πλέον ἢ δύ’ ἐμοῦ σῴζειν.

ΥΛ. Ψαύω μὲν ἔγωγε,
λαθίπονον δ’ ὀδυνᾶν οὔτ’ ἔνδοθεν οὔτε θύραθεν
ἔστι μοι ἐξανύσαι· βιότου τοιαῦτα νέμει Ζεύς.

ΗΡ. ‹Ἰὲ ἔ,› Ant.
Ὦ παῖ, ποῦ ποτ’ εἶ; Τᾷδέ με, τᾷδέ με
1025 πρόσλαβε κουφίσας. Ἰὲ ἔ, ἰὼ δαῖμον.
Θρῴσκει δ’ αὖ, θρῴσκει δειλαία
διολοῦσ’ ἡμᾶς
1030 ἀποτίβατος ἀγρία νόσος.
Ὦ Παλλὰς ‹Παλλάς›, τόδε μ’ αὖ λωβᾶται. Ἰὼ παῖ,
τὸν φύτορ’ οἰκτίρας ἀνεπίφθονον εἴρυσον ἔγχος,
παῖσον ἐμᾶς ὑπὸ κλῆδος· ἀκοῦ δ’ ἄχος ᾧ μ’ ἐχόλωσεν
σὰ μάτηρ ἄθεος, τὰν ὦδ’ ἐπίδοιμι πεσοῦσαν
1040 αὔτως, ὦδ’ αὔτως, ὥς μ’ ὤλεσεν ⏑⏑–⏑–.
‹Ἰὲ ἔ,›
Ὦ Διὸς αὐθαίμων, ὦ γλυκὺς Ἀΐδας,
εὔνασον, εὔνασόν μ’
ὠκυπέτᾳ μόρῳ τὸν μέλεον φθίσας.

ΧΟ. Κλύουσ’ ἔφριξα τάσδε συμφοράς, φίλαι,
1045 ἄνακτος, οἵαις οἷος ὢν ἐλαύνεται.

ΗΡ. Ὦ πολλὰ δὴ καὶ θερμὰ καὶ λόγῳ κακὰ
καὶ χερσὶ καὶ νώτοισι μοχθήσας ἐγώ·
κοὔπω τοιοῦτον οὔτ’ ἄκοιτις ἡ Διὸς
προὔθηκεν οὔθ’ ὁ στυγνὸς Εὐρυσθεὺς ἐμοὶ
1050 οἷον τόδ’ ἡ δολῶπις Οἰνέως κόρη
καθῆψεν ὤμοις τοῖς ἐμοῖς Ἐρινύων

ὑφαντὸν ἀμφίβληστρον, ᾧ διόλλυμαι.
Πλευραῖσι γὰρ προσμαχθὲν ἐκ μὲν ἐσχάτας
βέβρωκε σάρκας, πλεύμονός τ’ ἀρτηρίας
ῥοφεῖ ξυνοικοῦν· ἐκ δὲ χλωρὸν αἷμά μου
πέπωκεν ἤδη, καὶ διέφθαρμαι δέμας
τὸ πᾶν ἀφράστῳ τῇδε χειρωθεὶς πέδῃ.
Κοὐ ταῦτα λόγχη πεδιάς, οὔθ’ ὁ γηγενὴς
στρατὸς Γιγάντων, οὔτε θήρειος βία,
οὔθ’ Ἑλλάς, οὔτ’ ἄγλωσσος, οὔθ’ ὅσην ἐγὼ
γαῖαν καθαίρων ἱκόμην, ἔδρασέ πω·
γυνὴ δέ, θῆλυς οὖσα κοὐκ ἀνδρὸς φύσιν,
μόνη με δὴ καθεῖλε φασγάνου δίχα.
Ὦ παῖ, γενοῦ μοι παῖς ἐτήτυμος γεγώς,
καὶ μὴ τὸ μητρὸς ὄνομα πρεσβεύσῃς πλέον.
Δός μοι χεροῖν σαῖν αὐτὸς ἐξ οἴκου λαβὼν
ἐς χεῖρα τὴν τεκοῦσαν, ὡς εἰδῶ σάφα
εἰ τοὐμὸν ἀλγεῖς μᾶλλον ἢ κείνης, ὁρῶν
λωβητὸν εἶδος ἐν δίκῃ κακούμενον.
Ἴθ’, ὦ τέκνον, τόλμησον, οἰκτιρόν τέ με
πολλοῖσιν οἰκτρόν, ὅστις ὥστε παρθένος
βέβρυχα κλαίων· καὶ τόδ’ οὐδ’ ἂν εἷς ποτε
τόνδ’ ἄνδρα φαίη πρόσθ’ ἰδεῖν δεδρακότα,
ἀλλ’ ἀστένακτος αἰὲν εἰπόμην κακοῖς·
νῦν δ’ ἐκ τοιούτου θῆλυς ηὕρημαι τάλας.
Καὶ νῦν προσελθὼν στῆθι πλησίον πατρός,
σκέψαι δ’ ὁποίας ταῦτα συμφορᾶς ὕπο
πέπονθα· δείξω γὰρ τάδ’ ἐκ καλυμμάτων·
ἰδού, θεᾶσθε πάντες ἄθλιον δέμας,
ὁρᾶτε τὸν δύστηνον, ὡς οἰκτρῶς ἔχω.
Αἰαῖ, ὦ τάλας, αἰαῖ,
ἔθαλψεν ἄτης σπασμὸς ἀρτίως ὅδ’ αὖ,
διῆξε πλευρῶν, οὐδ’ ἀγύμναστόν μ’ ἐᾶν
ἔοικεν ἡ τάλαινα διάβορος νόσος.
Ὤναξ Ἀΐδη, δέξαι μ’,
ὦ Διὸς ἀκτίς, παῖσον·
ἔνσεισον, ὦναξ, ἐγκατάσκηψον βέλος,
πάτερ, κεραυνοῦ. Δαίνυται γὰρ αὖ πάλιν,
ἤνθηκεν, ἐξώρμηκεν. Ὦ χέρες, χέρες,

ὦ νῶτα καὶ στέρν’, ὦ φίλοι βραχίονες,
ὑμεῖς ἐκεῖνοι δὴ καθέσταθ’ οἵ ποτε
Νεμέας ἔνοικον, βουκόλων ἀλάστορα,
λέοντ’, ἄπλατον θρέμμα κἀπροσήγορον,
βίᾳ κατειργάσασθε, Λερναίαν θ’ ὕδραν,
διφυῆ τ’ ἄμικτον ἱπποβάμονα στρατὸν
θηρῶν, ὑβριστήν, ἄνομον, ὑπέροχον βίαν,
Ἐρυμάνθιόν τε θῆρα, τόν θ’ ὑπὸ χθονὸς
Ἅιδου τρίκρανον σκύλακ’, ἀπρόσμαχον τέρας,
δεινῆς Ἐχίδνης θρέμμα, τόν τε χρυσέων
δράκοντα μήλων φύλακ’ ἐπ’ ἐσχάτοις τόποις·
ἄλλων τε μόχθων μυρίων ἐγευσάμην,
κοὐδεὶς τροπαῖ’ ἔστησε τῶν ἐμῶν χερῶν.
Νῦν δ’ ὧδ’ ἄναρθρος καὶ κατερρακωμένος
τυφλῆς ὑπ’ ἄτης ἐκπεπόρθημαι τάλας,
ὁ τῆς ἀρίστης μητρὸς ὠνομασμένος,
ὁ τοῦ κατ’ ἄστρα Ζηνὸς αὐδηθεὶς γόνος.
Ἀλλ’ εὖ γέ τοι τόδ’ ἴστε, κἂν τὸ μηδὲν ὦ
κἂν μηδὲν ἕρπω, τήν γε δράσασαν τάδε
χειρώσομαι κἀκ τῶνδε· προσμόλοι μόνον,
ἵν’ ἐκδιδαχθῇ πᾶσιν ἀγγέλλειν ὅτι
καὶ ζῶν κακούς γε καὶ θανὼν ἐτεισάμην.

ΧΟ. Ὦ τλῆμον Ἑλλάς, πένθος οἷον εἰσορῶ
ἕξουσαν, ἀνδρὸς τοῦδέ γ’ εἰ σφαλήσεται.

ΥΛ. Ἐπεὶ παρέσχες ἀντιφωνῆσαι, πάτερ,
σιγὴν παρασχών, κλῦθί μου νοσῶν ὅμως·
αἰτήσομαι γάρ σ’ ὧν δίκαια τυγχάνειν.
Δός μοι σεαυτόν, μὴ τοσοῦτον ὡς δάκνῃ
θυμῷ δύσοργος· οὐ γὰρ ἂν γνοίης ἐν οἷς
χαίρειν προθυμῇ κἀν ὅτοις ἀλγεῖς μάτην.
ΗΡ. Εἰπὼν ὃ χρῄζεις λῆξον· ὡς ἐγὼ νοσῶν
οὐδὲν ξυνίημ’ ὧν σὺ ποικίλλεις πάλαι.

ΥΛ. Τῆς μητρὸς ἥκω τῆς ἐμῆς φράσων ἐν οἷς
νῦν ἐστιν οἷς θ’ ἥμαρτεν οὐχ ἑκουσία.

ΗΡ. Ὦ παγκάκιστε, καὶ παρεμνήσω γὰρ αὖ
1125 τῆς πατροφόντου μητρός, ὡς κλύειν ἐμέ;

ΥΛ. Ἔχει γὰρ οὕτως ὥστε μὴ σιγᾶν πρέπειν.

ΗΡ. Οὐ δῆτα, τοῖς γε πρόσθεν ἡμαρτημένοις.

ΥΛ. Ἀλλ’ οὐδὲ μὲν δὴ τοῖς γ’ ἐφ’ ἡμέραν ἐρεῖς.

ΗΡ. Λέγ’, εὐλαβοῦ δὲ μὴ φανῇς κακὸς γεγώς.
1130 ΥΛ. Λέγω· τέθνηκεν ἀρτίως νεοσφαγής.

ΗΡ. Πρὸς τοῦ; τέρας τοι διὰ κακῶν ἐθέσπισας.

ΥΛ. Αὐτὴ πρὸς αὐτῆς, οὐδενὸς πρὸς ἐκτόπου.

ΗΡ. Οἴμοι· πρὶν ὡς χρῆν σφ’ ἐξ ἐμῆς θανεῖν χερός;

ΥΛ. Κἂν σοῦ στραφείη θυμός, εἰ τὸ πᾶν μάθοις.
ΗΡ. Δεινοῦ λόγου κατῆρξας· εἰπὲ δ’ ᾗ νοεῖς.

ΥΛ. Ἅπαν τὸ χρῆμ’, ἥμαρτε χρηστὰ μωμένη.

ΗΡ. Χρήστ’, ὦ κάκιστε, πατέρα σὸν κτείνασα δρᾷ;

ΥΛ. Στέργημα γὰρ δοκοῦσα προσβαλεῖν σέθεν
ἀπήμπλαχ’, ὡς προσεῖδε τοὺς ἔνδον γάμους.
ΗΡ. Καὶ τίς τοσοῦτος φαρμακεὺς Τραχινίων;

ΥΛ. Νέσσος πάλαι Κένταυρος ἐξέπεισέ νιν
τοιῷδε φίλτρῳ τὸν σὸν ἐκμῆναι πόθον.

ΗΡ. Ἰοὺ ἰοὺ δύστηνος, οἴχομαι τάλας·
ὄλωλ’ ὄλωλα, φέγγος οὐκέτ’ ἔστι μοι.
ΟἴμοιΟἴμοι, φρονῶ δὴ ξυμφορᾶς ἵν’ ἔσταμεν.
Ἴθ’, ὦ τέκνον· πατὴρ γὰρ οὐκέτ’ ἔστι σοι·
κάλει τὸ πᾶν μοι σπέρμα σῶν ὁμαιμόνων,
κάλει δὲ τὴν τάλαιναν Ἀλκμήνην, Διὸς
μάτην ἄκοιτιν, ὡς τελευταίαν ἐμοῦ
φήμην πύθησθε θεσφάτων ὅσ’ οἶδ’ ἐγώ.

ΥΛ. Ἀλλ’ οὔτε μήτηρ ἐνθάδ’, ἀλλ’ ἐπακτίᾳ
Τίρυνθι συμβέβηκεν ὥστ’ ἔχειν ἔδραν,
παίδων δὲ τοὺς μὲν ξυλλαβοῦσ’ αὐτὴ τρέφει
τοὺς δ’ ἂν τὸ Θήβης ἄστυ ναίοντας μάθοις·
ἡμεῖς δ’ ὅσοι πάρεσμεν, εἴ τι χρή, πάτερ,
πράσσειν, κλύοντες ἐξυπηρετήσομεν.

ΗΡ. Σὺ δ’ οὖν ἄκουε τοὔργον· ἐξήκεις δ’ ἵνα
φανεῖς ὁποῖος ὢν ἀνὴρ ἐμὸς καλῇ.
Ἐμοὶ γὰρ ἦν πρόφαντον ἐκ πατρὸς πάλαι
πρὸς τῶν πνεόντων μηδενὸς θανεῖν ὕπο,
ἀλλ’ ὅστις Ἅιδου φθίμενος οἰκήτωρ πέλοι.
Ὅδ’ οὖν ὁ θὴρ Κένταυρος, ὡς τὸ θεῖον ἦν
πρόφαντον, οὕτω ζῶντά μ’ ἔκτεινεν θανών.
Φανῶ δ’ ἐγὼ τούτοισι συμβαίνοντ’ ἴσα
μαντεῖα καινά, τοῖς πάλαι ξυνήγορα,
ἃ τῶν ὀρείων καὶ χαμαικοιτῶν ἐγὼ
Σελλῶν ἐσελθὼν ἄλσος εἰσεγραψάμην
πρὸς τῆς πατρῴας καὶ πολυγλώσσου δρυός,
ἥ μοι χρόνῳ τῷ ζῶντι καὶ παρόντι νῦν
ἔφασκε μόχθων τῶν ἐφεστώτων ἐμοὶ
λύσιν τελεῖσθαι· κἀδόκουν πράξειν καλῶς·
τὸ δ’ ἦν ἄρ’ οὐδὲν ἄλλο πλὴν θανεῖν ἐμέ·

τοῖς γὰρ θανοῦσι μόχθος οὐ προσγίγνεται.
Ταῦτ’ οὖν ἐπειδὴ λαμπρὰ συμβαίνει, τέκνον,
1175 δεῖ σ’ αὖ γενέσθαι τῷδε τἀνδρὶ σύμμαχον,
καὶ μὴ ‘πιμεῖναι τοὐμὸν ὀξῦναι στόμα,
ἀλλ’ αὐτὸν εἰκάθοντα συμπράσσειν, νόμον
κάλλιστον ἐξευρόντα, πειθαρχεῖν πατρί.

ΥΛ. Ἀλλ’, ὦ πάτερ, ταρβῶ μὲν εἰς λόγου στάσιν
1180 τοιάνδ’ ἐπελθών, πείσομαι δ’ ἃ σοι δοκεῖ.

ΗΡ. Ἔμβαλλε χεῖρα δεξιὰν πρώτιστά μοι.

ΥΛ. Ὡς πρὸς τί πίστιν τήνδ’ ἄγαν ἐπιστρέφεις;

ΗΡ. Οὐ θᾶσσον οἴσεις μηδ’ ἀπιστήσεις ἐμοί;

ΥΛ. Ἰδοὺ προτείνω, κοὐδὲν ἀντειρήσεται.
1185 ΗΡ. Ὄμνυ Διός νυν τοῦ με φύσαντος κάρα -

ΥΛ. Ἦ μὴν τί δράσειν; Καὶ τόδ’ ἐξειρήσεται;

ΗΡ. Ἦ μὴν ἐμοὶ τὸ λεχθὲν ἔργον ἐκτελεῖν.

ΥΛ. Ὄμνυμ’ ἔγωγε, Ζῆν’ ἔχων ἐπώμοτον.

ΗΡ. Εἰ δ’ ἐκτὸς ἔλθοις, πημονὰς εὔχου λαβεῖν.
1190 ΥΛ. Οὐ μὴ λάβω, δράσω γάρ· εὔχομαι δ’ ὅμως.

ΗΡ. Οἶσθ’ οὖν τὸν Οἴτης Ζηνὸς ὕψιστον πάγον;

ΥΛ. Οἶδ’, ὡς θυτήρ γε πολλὰ δὴ σταθεὶς ἄνω.

ΗΡ. Ἐνταῦθά νυν χρὴ τοὐμὸν ἐξάραντά σε
σῶμ’ αὐτόχειρα, καὶ ξὺν οἷς χρῄζεις φίλων,
1195 πολλὴν μὲν ὕλην τῆς βαθυρρίζου δρυὸς
κείραντα, πολλὸν δ’ ἄρσεν’ ἐκτεμόνθ’ ὁμοῦ
ἄγριον ἔλαιον, σῶμα τοὐμὸν ἐμβαλεῖν,
καὶ πευκίνης λαβόντα λαμπάδος σέλας
πρῆσαι. Γόου δὲ μηδὲν εἰσίτω δάκρυ,
1200 ἀλλ’ ἀστένακτος κἀδάκρυτος, εἴπερ εἶ
τοῦδ’ ἀνδρός, ἔρξον· εἰ δὲ μή, μενῶ σ’ ἐγὼ
καὶ νέρθεν ὢν ἀραῖος εἰσαεὶ βαρύς.

ΥΛ. Οἴμοι, πάτερ, τί εἶπας; Οἷά μ’ εἴργασαι.

ΗΡ. Ὁποῖα δραστέ’ ἐστίν· εἰ δὲ μή, πατρὸς
ἄλλου γενοῦ του μηδ’ ἐμὸς κληθῇς ἔτι.

ΥΛ. Οἴμοι μάλ’ αὖθις, οἷά μ’ ἐκκαλῇ, πάτερ,
φονέα γενέσθαι καὶ παλαμναῖον σέθεν.

ΗΡ. Οὐ δῆτ’ ἔγωγ’, ἀλλ’ ὧν ἔχω παιώνιον
καὶ μοῦνον ἰατῆρα τῶν ἐμῶν κακῶν.
ΥΛ. Καὶ πῶς ὑπαίθων σῶμ’ ἂν ἰῴμην τὸ σόν;

ΗΡ. Ἀλλ’ εἰ φοβῇ πρὸς τοῦτο, τἄλλα γ’ ἔργασαι.

ΥΛ. Φορᾶς γέ τοι φθόνησις οὐ γενήσεται.

ΗΡ. Ἦ καὶ πυρᾶς πλήρωμα τῆς εἰρημένης;

ΥΛ. Ὅσον γ’ ἂν αὐτὸς μὴ ποτιψαύων χεροῖν·
τὰ δ’ ἄλλα πράξω κοὐ καμῇ τοὐμὸν μέρος.

ΗΡ. Ἀλλ’ ἀρκέσει καὶ ταῦτα· πρόσνειμαι δέ μοι
χάριν βραχεῖαν πρὸς μακροῖς ἄλλοις διδούς.

ΥΛ. Εἰ καὶ μακρὰ κάρτ’ ἐστίν, ἐργασθήσεται.

ΗΡ. Τὴν Εὐρυτείαν οἶσθα δῆτα παρθένον;
1220 ΥΛ. Ἰόλην ἔλεξας, ὥς γ’ ἐπεικάζειν ἐμέ.

ΗΡ. Ἔγνως. Τοσοῦτον δή σ’ ἐπισκήπτω, τέκνον·
ταύτην, ἐμοῦ θανόντος, εἴπερ εὐσεβεῖν
βούλει, πατρῴων ὁρκίων μεμνημένος,
προσθοῦ δάμαρτα, μηδ’ ἀπιστήσῃς πατρί·
1225 μηδ’ ἄλλος ἀνδρῶν τοῖς ἐμοῖς πλευροῖς ὁμοῦ
κλιθεῖσαν αὐτὴν ἀντὶ σοῦ λάβοι ποτέ,
ἀλλ’ αὐτός, ὦ παῖ, τοῦτο κήδευσον λέχος.
Πείθου· τὸ γάρ τοι μεγάλα πιστεύσαντ’ ἐμοὶ
σμικροῖς ἀπιστεῖν τὴν πάρος συγχεῖ χάριν.
1230 ΥΛ. Οἴμοι. Τὸ μὲν νοσοῦντι θυμοῦσθαι κακόν,
τὸ δ’ ὧδ’ ὁρᾶν φρονοῦντα τίς ποτ’ ἂν φέροι;

ΗΡ. Ὡς ἐργασείων οὐδὲν ὧν λέγω θροεῖς.

ΥΛ. Τίς γάρ ποθ’, ἥ μοι μητρὶ μὲν θανεῖν μόνη
μεταίτιος σοί τ’ αὖθις ὡς ἔχεις ἔχειν,
1235 τίς ταῦτ’ ἄν, ὅστις μὴ ‘ξ ἀλαστόρων νοσοῖ,
ἔλοιτο; κρεῖσσον κἀμέ γ’, ὦ πάτερ, θανεῖν
ἢ τοῖσιν ἐχθίστοισι συνναίειν ὁμοῦ.

ΗΡ. Ἀνὴρ ὅδ’ ὡς ἔοικεν οὐ νεμεῖν ἐμοὶ

φθίνοντι μοῖραν· ἀλλά τοι θεῶν ἀρὰ
μενεῖ σ’ ἀπιστήσαντα τοῖς ἐμοῖς λόγοις.

ΥΛ. Οἴμοι, τάχ’, ὡς ἔοικας, ὡς νοσεῖς φράσεις.

ΗΡ. Σὺ γάρ μ’ ἀπ’ εὐνασθέντος ἐκκινεῖς κακοῦ.

ΥΛ. Δείλαιος, ὡς ἐς πολλὰ τἀπορεῖν ἔχω.

ΗΡ. Οὐ γὰρ δικαιοῖς τοῦ φυτεύσαντος κλύειν.
ΥΛ. Ἀλλ’ ἐκδιδαχθῶ δῆτα δυσσεβεῖν, πάτερ;

ΗΡ. Οὐ δυσσέβεια, τοὐμὸν εἰ τέρψεις κέαρ.

ΥΛ. Πράσσειν ἄνωγας οὖν με πανδίκως τάδε;

ΗΡ. Ἔγωγε· τούτων μάρτυρας καλῶ θεούς.

ΥΛ. Τοιγὰρ ποήσω, κοὐκ ἀπώσομαι, τὸ σὸν
θεοῖσι δεικνὺς ἔργον· οὐ γὰρ ἄν ποτε

κακὸς φανείην σοί γε πιστεύσας, πάτερ.

ΗΡ. Καλῶς τελευτᾷς, κἀπὶ τοῖσδε τὴν χάριν
ταχεῖαν, ὦ παῖ, πρόσθες, ὡς πρὶν ἐμπεσεῖν
σπαραγμὸν ἤ τιν’ οἶστρον, ἐς πυράν με θῇς.
1255 Ἄγ’ ἐγκονεῖτ’, αἴρεσθε· παῦλά τοι κακῶν
αὕτη, τελευτὴ τοῦδε τἀνδρὸς ὑστάτη.

ΥΛ. Ἀλλ’ οὐδὲν εἴργει σοὶ τελειοῦσθαι τάδε,
ἐπεὶ κελεύεις κἀξαναγκάζεις, πάτερ.

ΗΡ. Ἄγε νυν, πρὶν τήνδ’ ἀνακινῆσαι
1260 νόσον, ὦ ψυχὴ σκληρά, χάλυβος
λιθοκόλλητον στόμιον παρέχουσ’,
ἀνάπαυε βοήν, ὡς ἐπίχαρτον
τελέουσ’ ἀεκούσιον ἔργον.

ΥΛ. Αἴρετ’, ὀπαδοί, μεγάλην μὲν ἐμοὶ
1265 τούτων θέμενοι συγγνωμοσύνην,
μεγάλην δὲ θεῶν ἀγνωμοσύνην
εἰδότες ἔργων τῶν πρασσομένων,
οἳ φύσαντες καὶ κληζόμενοι
πατέρες τοιαῦτ’ ἐφορῶσι πάθη.
1270 Τὰ μὲν οὖν μέλλοντ’ οὐδεὶς ἐφορᾷ,
τὰ δὲ νῦν ἑστῶτ’ οἰκτρὰ μὲν ἡμῖν,
αἰσχρὰ δ’ ἐκείνοις,
χαλεπώτατα δ’ οὖν ἀνδρῶν πάντων
τῷ τήνδ’ ἄτην ὑπέχοντι.
1275 ΧΟ. Λείπου μηδὲ σύ, παρθέν’, ἀπ’ οἴκων,

μεγάλους μὲν ἰδοῦσα νέους θανάτους,
πολλὰ δὲ πήματα ‹καὶ› καινοπαθῆ·
κοὐδὲν τούτων ὅ τι μὴ Ζεύς.

Οιδίπους Τύραννος - OEDIPUS THE KING

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ
Ὦ τέκνα, Κάδμου τοῦ πάλαι νέα τροφή,
τίνας ποθ’ ἕδρας τάσδε μοι θοάζετε
ἱκτηρίοις κλάδοισιν ἐξεστεμμένοι;
Πόλις δ’ ὁμοῦ μὲν θυμιαμάτων γέμει,
ὁμοῦ δὲ παιάνων τε καὶ στεναγμάτων·
ἀγὼ δικαιῶν μὴ παρ’ ἀγγέλων, τέκνα,
ἄλλων ἀκούειν αὐτὸς ὧδ’ ἐλήλυθα,
ὁ πᾶσι κλεινὸς Οἰδίπους καλούμενος.
Ἀλλ’, ὦ γεραιέ, φράζ’, ἐπεὶ πρέπων ἔφυς
πρὸ τῶνδε φωνεῖν· τίνι τρόπῳ καθέστατε,
δείσαντες ἢ στέρξαντες; ὡς θέλοντος ἂν
ἐμοῦ προσαρκεῖν πᾶν· δυσάλγητος γὰρ ἂν
εἴην τοιάνδε μὴ οὐ κατοικτίρων ἕδραν.

ΙΕΡΕΥΣ
Ἀλλ’, ὦ κρατύνων Οἰδίπους χώρας ἐμῆς,
ὁρᾷς μὲν ἡμᾶς ἡλίκοι προσήμεθα
βωμοῖσι τοῖς σοῖς, οἱ μὲν οὐδέπω μακρὰν
πτέσθαι σθένοντες, οἱ δὲ σὺν γήρᾳ βαρεῖς,
ἱερεύς, ἐγὼ μὲν Ζηνός, οἵδε τ’ ἠθέων
λεκτοί· τὸ δ’ ἄλλο φῦλον ἐξεστεμμένον
ἀγοραῖσι θακεῖ, πρός τε Παλλάδος διπλοῖς
ναοῖς, ἐπ’ Ἰσμηνοῦ τε μαντείᾳ σποδῷ.
Πόλις γάρ, ὥσπερ καὐτὸς εἰσορᾷς, ἄγαν
ἤδη σαλεύει, κἀνακουφίσαι κάρα
βυθῶν ἔτ’ οὐχ οἵα τε φοινίου σάλου,
φθίνουσα μὲν κάλυξιν ἐγκάρποις χθονός,
φθίνουσα δ’ ἀγέλαις βουνόμοις τόκοισί τε
ἀγόνοις γυναικῶν· ἐν δ’ ὁ πυρφόρος θεὸς
σκήψας ἐλαύνει, λοιμὸς ἔχθιστος, πόλιν,
ὑφ’ οὗ κενοῦται δῶμα Καδμεῖον, μέλας δ’
Ἅιδης στεναγμοῖς καὶ γόοις πλουτίζεται.

Θεοῖσι μέν νυν οὐκ ἰσούμενός σ’ ἐγὼ
οὐδ’ οἵδε παῖδες ἑζόμεσθ’ ἐφέστιοι,
ἀνδρῶν δὲ πρῶτον ἔν τε συμφοραῖς βίου
κρίνοντες ἔν τε δαιμόνων ξυναλλαγαῖς,
ὅς γ’ ἐξέλυσας ἄστυ καδμεῖον μολὼν
σκληρᾶς ἀοιδοῦ δασμὸν ὃν παρείχομεν,
καὶ ταῦθ’ ὑφ’ ἡμῶν οὐδὲν ἐξειδὼς πλέον
οὐδ’ ἐκδιδαχθείς, ἀλλὰ προσθήκῃ θεοῦ
λέγῃ νομίζῃ θ’ ἡμὶν ὀρθῶσαι βίον.
Νῦν τ’, ὦ κράτιστον πᾶσιν Οἰδίπου κάρα,
ἱκετεύομέν σε πάντες οἵδε πρόστροποι
ἀλκήν τιν’ εὑρεῖν ἡμίν, εἴτε του θεῶν
φήμην ἀκούσας εἴτ’ ἀπ’ ἀνδρὸς οἶσθά του·
ὡς τοῖσιν ἐμπείροισι καὶ τὰς ξυμφορὰς
ζώσας ὁρῶ μάλιστα τῶν βουλευμάτων.
Ἴθ’, ὦ βροτῶν ἄριστ’, ἀνόρθωσον πόλιν·
ἴθ’, εὐλαβήθηθ’· ὡς σὲ νῦν μὲν ἥδε γῆ
σωτῆρα κλῄζει τῆς πάρος προθυμίας·
ἀρχῆς δὲ τῆς σῆς μηδαμῶς μεμνώμεθα
στάντες τ’ ἐς ὀρθὸν καὶ πεσόντες ὕστερον,
ἀλλ’ ἀσφαλείᾳ τήνδ’ ἀνόρθωσον πόλιν.
Ὄρνιθι γὰρ καὶ τὴν τότ’ αἰσίῳ τύχην
παρέσχες ἡμῖν, καὶ τανῦν ἴσος γενοῦ·
ὡς, εἴπερ ἄρξεις τῆσδε γῆς ὥσπερ κρατεῖς,
ξὺν ἀνδράσιν κάλλιον ἢ κενῆς κρατεῖν·
ὡς οὐδέν ἐστιν οὔτε πύργος οὔτε ναῦς
ἔρημος ἀνδρῶν μὴ ξυνοικούντων ἔσω.

ΟΙ. ὦ παῖδες οἰκτροί, γνωτὰ κοὐκ ἄγνωτά μοι
προσήλθεθ’ ἱμείροντες· εὖ γὰρ οἶδ’ ὅτι
νοσεῖτε πάντες, καὶ νοσοῦντες ὡς ἐγὼ
οὐκ ἔστιν ὑμῶν ὅστις ἐξ ἴσου νοσεῖ.
Τὸ μὲν γὰρ ὑμῶν ἄλγος εἰς ἕν’ ἔρχεται
μόνον καθ’ αὑτόν, κοὐδέν’ ἄλλον, ἡ δ’ ἐμὴ
ψυχὴ πόλιν τε κἀμὲ καὶ σ’ ὁμοῦ στένει.
Ὥστ’ οὐχ ὕπνῳ γ’ εὕδοντά μ’ ἐξεγείρετε·

ἀλλ’ ἴστε πολλὰ μέν με δακρύσαντα δή,
πολλὰς δ’ ὁδοὺς ἐλθόντα φροντίδος πλάνοις·
ἣν δ’ εὖ σκοπῶν εὕρισκον ἴασιν μόνην,
ταύτην ἔπραξα· παῖδα γὰρ Μενοικέως
70 Κρέοντ’, ἐμαυτοῦ γαμβρόν, ἐς τὰ Πυθικὰ
ἔπεμψα Φοίβου δώμαθ’, ὡς πύθοιθ’ ὅ τι
δρῶν ἢ τί φωνῶν τήνδε ῥυσαίμην πόλιν.
Καί μ’ ἦμαρ ἤδη ξυμμετρούμενον χρόνῳ
λυπεῖ τί πράσσει· τοῦ γὰρ εἰκότος πέρα
75 ἄπεστι πλείω τοῦ καθήκοντος χρόνου.
Ὅταν δ’ ἵκηται, τηνικαῦτ’ ἐγὼ κακὸς
μὴ δρῶν ἂν εἴην πάνθ’ ὅσ’ ἂν δηλοῖ θεός.

ΙΕ. Ἀλλ’ εἰς καλὸν σύ τ’ εἶπας οἵδε τ’ ἀρτίως
Κρέοντα προσστείχοντα σημαίνουσί μοι.
80 ΟΙ. Ὦναξ Ἄπολλον, εἰ γὰρ ἐν τύχῃ γέ τῳ
σωτῆρι βαίη, λαμπρὸς ὥσπερ ὄμματι.

ΙΕ. Ἀλλ’ εἰκάσαι μέν, ἡδύς· οὐ γὰρ ἂν κάρα
πολυστεφὴς ὧδ’ εἶρπε παγκάρπου δάφνης.

ΟΙ. Τάχ’ εἰσόμεσθα· ξύμμετρος γὰρ ὡς κλύειν.
85 Ἄναξ, ἐμὸν κήδευμα, παῖ Μενοικέως,
τίν’ ἡμὶν ἥκεις τοῦ θεοῦ φήμην φέρων;

ΚΡΕΩΝ
Ἐσθλήν· λέγω γὰρ καὶ τὰ δύσφορ’, εἰ τύχοι
κατ’ ὀρθὸν ἐξελθόντα, πάντ’ ἂν εὐτυχεῖν.

ΟΙ. Ἔστιν δὲ ποῖον τοὔπος; οὔτε γὰρ θρασὺς
οὔτ’ οὖν προδείσας εἰμὶ τῷ γε νῦν λόγῳ.

ΚΡ. Εἰ τῶνδε χρῄζεις πλησιαζόντων κλύειν,
ἕτοιμος εἰπεῖν, εἴτε καὶ στείχειν ἔσω.

ΟΙ. Ἐς πάντας αὔδα· τῶνδε γὰρ πλέον φέρω
τὸ πένθος ἢ καὶ τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς πέρι.
ΚΡ. Λέγοιμ’ ἂν οἷ’ ἤκουσα τοῦ θεοῦ πάρα.
Ἄνωγεν ἡμᾶς Φοῖβος ἐμφανῶς ἄναξ
μίασμα χώρας ὡς τεθραμμένον χθονὶ
ἐν τῇδ’ ἐλαύνειν μηδ’ ἀνήκεστον τρέφειν.

ΟΙ. Ποίῳ καθαρμῷ; τίς ὁ τρόπος τῆς ξυμφορᾶς;
ΚΡ. Ἀνδρηλατοῦντας, ἢ φόνῳ φόνον πάλιν
λύοντας, ὡς τόδ’ αἷμα χειμάζον πόλιν.

ΟΙ. Ποίου γὰρ ἀνδρὸς τήνδε μηνύει τύχην;

ΚΡ. Ἦν ἡμίν, ὦναξ, Λάϊός ποθ’ ἡγεμὼν
γῆς τῆσδε, πρὶν σὲ τήνδ’ ἀπευθύνειν πόλιν.
ΟΙ. Ἔξοιδ’ ἀκούων· οὐ γὰρ εἰσεῖδόν γέ πω.

ΚΡ. Τούτου θανόντος νῦν ἐπιστέλλει σαφῶς

τοὺς αὐτοέντας χειρὶ τιμωρεῖν τινας.

ΟΙ. Οἱ δ’ εἰσὶ ποῦ γῆς; ποῦ τόδ’ εὑρεθήσεται
ἴχνος παλαιᾶς δυστέκμαρτον αἰτίας;
110 ΚΡ. Ἐν τῇδ’ ἔφασκε γῇ· τὸ δὲ ζητούμενον
ἁλωτόν, ἐκφεύγει δὲ τἀμελούμενον.

ΟΙ. Πότερα δ’ ἐν οἴκοις, ἢ ‘ν ἀγροῖς ὁ Λάϊος,
ἢ γῆς ἐπ’ ἄλλης τῷδε συμπίπτει φόνῳ;

ΚΡ. Θεωρός, ὡς ἔφασκεν, ἐκδημῶν πάλιν
115 πρὸς οἶκον οὐκέθ’ ἵκεθ’, ὡς ἀπεστάλη.

ΟΙ. Οὐδ’ ἄγγελός τις οὐδὲ συμπράκτωρ ὁδοῦ
κατεῖδ’ ὅτου τις ἐκμαθὼν ἐχρήσατ’ ἄν;

ΚΡ. Θνῄσκουσι γάρ, πλὴν εἷς τις ὃς φόβῳ φυγὼν
ὧν εἶδε πλὴν ἓν οὐδὲν εἶχ’ εἰδὼς φράσαι.
120 ΟΙ. Τὸ ποῖον; Ἓν γὰρ πόλλ’ ἂν ἐξεύροι μαθεῖν,
ἀρχὴν βραχεῖαν εἰ λάβοιμεν ἐλπίδος.

ΚΡ. Λῃστὰς ἔφασκε συντυχόντας οὐ μιᾷ
ῥώμῃ κτανεῖν νιν, ἀλλὰ σὺν πλήθει χερῶν.

ΟΙ. Πῶς οὖν ὁ λῃστής, εἴ τι μὴ ξὺν ἀργύρῳ
ἐπράσσετ’ ἐνθένδ’, ἐς τόδ’ ἂν τόλμης ἔβη;

ΚΡ. Δοκοῦντα ταῦτ’ ἦν· Λαΐου δ’ ὁλωλότος
οὐδεὶς ἀρωγὸς ἐν κακοῖς ἐγίγνετο.

ΟΙ. Κακὸν δὲ ποῖον ἐμποδών, τυραννίδος
οὕτω πεσούσης, εἶργε τοῦτ’ ἐξειδέναι;
ΚΡ. Ἡ ποικιλῳδὸς Σφὶγξ τὸ πρὸς ποσὶ σκοπεῖν
μεθέντας ἡμᾶς τἀφανῆ προσήγετο.

ΟΙ. Ἀλλ’ ἐξ ὑπαρχῆς αὖθις αὖτ’ ἐγὼ φανῶ·
ἐπαξίως γὰρ Φοῖβος, ἀξίως δὲ σύ,
πρὸς τοῦ θανότος τήνδ’ ἔθεσθ’ ἐπιστροφήν·
ὥστ’ ἐνδίκως ὄψεσθε κἀμὲ σύμμαχον,
γῇ τῇδε τιμωροῦντα τῷ θεῷ θ’ ἅμα.
Ὑπὲρ γὰρ οὐχὶ τῶν ἀπωτέρω φίλων,
ἀλλ’ αὐτὸς αὐτοῦ τοῦτ’ ἀποσκεδῶ μύσος.
Ὅστις γὰρ ἦν ἐκεῖνον ὁ κτανὼν τάχ’ ἂν
κἄμ’ ἂν τοιαύτῃ χειρὶ τιμωρεῖν θέλοι·
κείνῳ προσαρκῶν οὖν ἐμαυτὸν ὠφελῶ.
Ἀλλ’ ὡς τάχιστα, παῖδες, ὑμεῖς μὲν βάθρων
ἵστασθε, τούσδ’ ἄραντες ἱκτῆρας κλάδους,
ἄλλος δὲ Κάδμου λαὸν ὧδ’ ἀθροιζέτω,
ὡς πᾶν ἐμοῦ δράσοντος· ἢ γὰρ εὐτυχεῖς
σὺν τῷ θεῷ φανούμεθ’ ἢ πεπτωκότες.

ΙΕ. Ὦ παῖδες, ἱστώμεσθα· τῶνδε γὰρ χάριν

καὶ δεῦρ’ ἔβημεν ὧν ὅδ’ ἐξαγγέλλεται.
Φοῖβος δ’ ὁ πέμψας τάσδε μαντείας ἅμα
150 σωτήρ θ’ ἵκοιτο καὶ νόσου παυστήριος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
Ὦ Διὸς ἀδυεπὲς φάτι, τίς ποτε Str. 1 .
τᾶς πολυχρύσου
Πυθῶνος ἀγλαὰς ἔβας
Θήβας; Ἐκτέταμαι φοβερὰν φρένα,
δείματι πάλλων,
ἰήιε Δάλιε Παιάν,
155 ἀμφὶ σοὶ ἀζόμενος τί μοι ἢ νέον
ἢ περιτελλομέναις ὥραις πάλιν
ἐξανύσεις χρέος·
εἰπέ μοι, ὦ χρυσέας τέκνον Ἐλπίδος,
ἄμβροτε Φάμα.
Πρῶτά σε κεκλόμενος, θύγατερ Διός, Ant. 1 .
ἄμβροτ’ Ἀθάνα,
160 γαιάοχόν τ’ ἀδελφεὰν
Ἄρτεμιν, ἃ κυκλόεντ’ ἀγορᾶς θρόνον
εὐκλέα θάσσει,
καὶ Φοῖβον ἑκαβόλον, ἰώ,
τρισσοὶ ἀλεξίμοροι προφάνητέ μοι,
εἴ ποτε καὶ προτέρας ἄτας ὕπερ
165 ὀρνυμένας πόλει
ἠνύσατ’ ἐκτοπίαν φλόγα πήματος,
ἔλθετε καὶ νῦν.
Ὦ πόποι, ἀνάριθμα γὰρ φέρω Str. 2 .
πήματα· νοσεῖ δέ μοι πρόπας
170 στόλος, οὐδ’ ἔνι φροντίδος ἔγχος
ᾧ τις ἀλέξεται· οὔτε γὰρ ἔκγονα
κλυτᾶς χθονὸς αὔξεται οὔτε τόκοισιν
ἰηίων καμάτων ἀνέχουσι γυναῖκες·
175 ἄλλον δ’ ἂν ἄλλῳ προσίδοις ἄπερ εὔπτερον ὄρνιν
κρεῖσσον ἀμαιμακέτου πυρὸς ὄρμενον
ἀκτὰν πρὸς ἑσπέρου θεοῦ.

Ἷων πόλις ἀνάριθμος ὄλλυται· Ant. 2 .
νηλέα δὲ γένεθλα πρὸς πέδῳ
θαναταφόρα κεῖται ἀνοίκτως·
ἐν δ’ ἄλοχοι πολιαί τ’ ἔπι ματέρες
ἀκτὰν παρὰ βώμιον ἄλλοθεν ἄλλαι
λυγρῶν πόνων ἱκετῆρες ἐπιστενάχουσι.
Παιὰν δὲ λάμπει στονόεσσά τε γῆρυς ὅμαυλος·
ὦν ὕπερ, ὦ χρυσέα θύγατερ Διός,
εὐῶπα πέμψον ἀλκάν.
Ἄρεά τε τὸν μαλερόν, ὃς Str. 3 .
νῦν ἄχαλκος ἀσπίδων
φλέγει με περιβόατος ἀντιάζων,
παλίσσυτον δράμημα νωτίσαι πάτρας
ἄπουρον, εἴτ’ ἐς μέγαν
θάλαμον Ἀμφιτρίτας,
εἴτ’ ἐς τὸν ἀπόξενον ὅρμων
Θρῄκιον κλύδωνα·
τελεῖν γάρ, εἴ τι νὺξ ἀφῇ,
τοῦτ’ ἐπ’ ἦμαρ ἔρχεται·
τόν, ὦ ‹τᾶν› πυρφόρων
ἀστραπᾶν κράτη νέμων,
ὦ Ζεῦ πάτερ, ὑπὸ σῷ φθίσον κεραυνῷ.
Λύκει’ ἄναξ, τά τε σὰ χρυ-Ant. 3 .
σοστρόφων ἀπ’ ἀγκυλῶν
βέλεα θέλοιμ’ ἂν ἀδάματ’ ἐνδατεῖσθαι
ἀρωγὰ προσταθέντα, τάς τε πυρφόρους
Ἀρτέμιδος αἴγλας, ξὺν αἷς
Λύκι’ ὄρεα διάσσει·
τὸν χρυσομίτραν τε κικλήσκω,
τᾶσδ’ ἐπώνυμον γᾶς,
οἰνῶπα Βάκχον εὔιον,
Μαινάδων ὁμόστολον
πελασθῆναι φλέγοντ’
ἀγλαῶπι ⏑ – ⏑ –
πεύκᾳ ‘πὶ τὸν ἀπότιμον ἐν θεοῖς θεόν.

ΟΙ. Αἰτεῖς· ἃ δ’ αἰτεῖς, τἄμ’ ἐὰν θέλῃς ἔπη
κλύων δέχεσθαι τῇ νόσῳ θ’ ὑπηρετεῖν,
ἀλκὴν λάβοις ἂν κἀνακούφισιν κακῶν.
Ἀγὼ ξένος μὲν τοῦ λόγου τοῦδ’ ἐξερῶ,
220 ξένος δὲ τοῦ πραχθέντος· οὐ γὰρ ἂν μακρὰν
ἴχνευον αὐτός, μὴ οὐκ ἔχων τι σύμβολον·
νῦν δ’, ὕστερος γὰρ ἀστὸς εἰς ἀστοὺς τελῶ,
ὑμῖν προφωνῶ πᾶσι Καδμείοις τάδε·
“Ὅστις ποθ’ ὑμῶν Λάϊον τὸν Λαβδάκου
225 κάτοιδεν ἀνδρὸς ἐκ τίνος διώλετο,
τοῦτον κελεύω πάντα σημαίνειν ἐμοί·
κεἰ μὲν φοβεῖται, τοὐπίκλημ’ ὑπεξέλοι
αὐτὸς καθ’ αὑτοῦ· πείσεται γὰρ ἄλλο μὲν
ἀστεργὲς οὐδέν, γῆς δ’ ἄπεισιν ἀσφαλής.
230 Εἰ δ’ αὖ τις ἄλλον οἶδεν ἢ ‘ξ ἄλλης χθονὸς
τὸν αὐτόχειρα, μὴ σιωπάτω· τὸ γὰρ
κέρδος τελῶ ‘γὼ χἠ χάρις προσκείσεται.
Εἰ δ’ αὖ σιωπήσεσθε, καί τις ἢ φίλου
δείσας ἀπώσει τοὔπος ἢ χαὐτοῦ τόδε,
235 ἃκ τῶνδε δράσω, ταῦτα χρὴ κλύειν ἐμοῦ.
Τὸν ἄνδρ’ ἀπαυδῶ τοῦτον, ὅστις ἐστί, γῆς
τῆσδ’ ἧς ἐγὼ κράτη τε καὶ θρόνους νέμω
μήτ’ εἰσδέχεσθαι μήτε προσφωνεῖν τινα,
μήτ’ ἐν θεῶν εὐχαῖσι μήτε θύμασιν
240 κοινὸν ποιεῖσθαι, μήτε χέρνιβος νέμειν·
ὠθεῖν δ’ ἀπ’ οἴκων πάντας, ὡς μιάσματος
τοῦδ’ ἡμὶν ὄντος, ὡς τὸ Πυθικὸν θεοῦ
μαντεῖον ἐξέφηνεν ἀρτίως ἐμοί.
Ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν τοιόσδε τῷ τε δαίμονι
245 τῷ τ’ ἀνδρὶ τῷ θανόντι σύμμαχος πέλω·
κατεύχομαι δὲ τὸν δεδρακότ’, εἴτε τις
εἷς ὢν λέληθεν εἴτε πλειόνων μέτα,
κακὸν κακῶς νιν ἄμορον ἐκτρῖψαι βίον·
ἐπεύχομαι δ’, οἴκοισιν εἰ ξυνέστιος
250 ἐν τοῖς ἐμοῖς γένοιτ’ ἐμοῦ ξυνειδότος,
παθεῖν ἅπερ τοῖσδ’ ἀρτίως ἠρασάμην.
Ὑμῖν δὲ ταῦτα πάντ’ ἐπισκήπτω τελεῖν,
ὑπέρ τ’ ἐμαυτοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ τε τῆσδέ τε
γῆς ὧδ’ ἀκάρπως κἀθέως ἐφθαρμένης.”

Οὐδ’ εἰ γὰρ ἦν τὸ πρᾶγμα μὴ θεήλατον,
ἀκάθαρτον ὑμᾶς εἰκὸς ἦν οὕτως ἐᾶν,
ἀνδρός γ’ ἀρίστου βασιλέως ὀλωλότος,
ἀλλ’ ἐξερευνᾶν· νῦν δ’ ἐπεὶ κυρῶ τ’ ἐγὼ
ἔχων μὲν ἀρχὰς ἃς ἐκεῖνος εἶχε πρίν,
ἔχων δὲ λέκτρα καὶ γυναῖχ’ ὁμόσπορον
κοινῶν τε παίδων κοίν’ ἄν, εἰ κείνῳ γένος
μὴ ‘δυστύχησεν, ἦν ἂν ἐκπεφυκότα -
νῦν δ’ ἐς τὸ κείνου κρᾶτ’ ἐνήλαθ’ ἡ τύχη·
ἀνθ’ ὧν ἐγὼ τάδ’, ὡσπερεὶ τοὐμοῦ πατρός,
ὑπερμαχοῦμαι, κἀπὶ πάντ’ ἀφίξομαι,
ζητῶν τὸν αὐτόχειρα τοῦ φόνου λαβεῖν,
τῷ Λαβδακείῳ παιδὶ Πολυδώρου τε καὶ
τοῦ πρόσθε Κάδμου τοῦ πάλαι τ’ Ἀγήνορος·
καὶ ταῦτα τοῖς μὴ δρῶσιν εὔχομαι θεοὺς
μήτ’ ἀροτὸν αὐτοῖς γῆς ἀνιέναι τινά,
μήτ’ οὖν γυναικῶν παῖδας, ἀλλὰ τῷ πότμῳ
τῷ νῦν φθερεῖσθαι κἄτι τοῦδ’ ἐχθίονι.
Ὑμῖν δὲ τοῖς ἄλλοισι Καδμείοις ὅσοις
τάδ’ ἔστ’ ἀρέσκονθ’ ἥ τε σύμμαχος Δίκη
χοἱ πάντες εὖ ξυνεῖεν εἰσαεὶ θεοί.

ΧΟ. Ὥσπερ μ’ ἀραῖον ἔλαβες, ὦδ’, ἄναξ, ἐρῶ·
οὔτ’ ἔκτανον γὰρ οὔτε τὸν κτανόντ’ ἔχω
δεῖξαι. Τὸ δὲ ζήτημα τοῦ πέμψαντος ἦν
Φοίβου τόδ’ εἰπεῖν, ὅστις εἴργασταί ποτε.
ΟΙ. Δίκαι’ ἔλεξας· ἀλλ’ ἀναγκάσαι θεοὺς
ἂν μὴ θέλωσιν οὐδ’ ἂν εἷς δύναιτ’ ἀνήρ.

ΧΟ. Τὰ δεύτερ’ ἐκ τῶνδ’ ἂν λέγοιμ’ ἅ μοι δοκεῖ.

ΟΙ. Εἰ καὶ τρίτ’ ἔστι, μὴ παρῇς τὸ μὴ οὐ φράσαι.

ΧΟ. Ἄνακτ’ ἄνακτι ταὔθ’ ὁρῶντ’ ἐπίσταμαι
μάλιστα Φοίβῳ Τειρεσίαν, παρ’ οὗ τις ἂν
σκοπῶν τάδ’, ὦναξ, ἐκμάθοι σαφέστατα.

ΟΙ. Ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἐν ἀργοῖς οὐδὲ τοῦτ’ ἐπραξάμην·
ἔπεμψα γὰρ Κρέοντος εἰπόντος διπλοῦς
πομπούς· πάλαι δὲ μὴ παρὼν θαυμάζεται.
ΧΟ. Καὶ μὴν τά γ’ ἄλλα κωφὰ καὶ παλαί’ ἔπη.

ΟΙ. Τὰ ποῖα ταῦτα; πάντα γὰρ σκοπῶ λόγον.

ΧΟ. Θανεῖν ἐλέχθη πρός τινων ὁδοιπόρων.

ΟΙ. Ἤκουσα κἀγώ· τὸν δ’ ἰδόντ’ οὐδεὶς ὁρᾷ.

ΧΟ. Ἀλλ’ εἴ τι μὲν δὴ δείματός γ’ ἔχει μέρος,
τὰς σὰς ἀκούων οὐ μενεῖ τοιάσδ’ ἀράς.

ΟΙ. Ὧι μή ‘στι δρῶντι τάρβος, οὐδ’ ἔπος φοβεῖ.

ΧΟ. Ἀλλ’ οὐξελέγξων αὐτὸν ἔστιν· οἵδε γὰρ
τὸν θεῖον ἤδη μάντιν ὧδ’ ἄγουσιν, ᾧ
τἀληθὲς ἐμπέφυκεν ἀνθρώπων μόνῳ.
ΟΙ. Ὦ πάντα νωμῶν Τειρεσία, διδακτά τε
ἄρρητά τ’ οὐράνιά τε καὶ χθονοστιβῆ,
πόλιν μέν, εἰ καὶ μὴ βλέπεις, φρονεῖς δ’ ὅμως
οἵᾳ νόσῳ σύνεστιν· ἧς σὲ προστάτην
σωτῆρά τ’, ὦναξ, μοῦνον ἐξευρίσκομεν.
Φοῖβος γάρ, εἴ τι μὴ κλύεις τῶν ἀγγέλων,
πέμψασιν ἡμῖν ἀντέπεμψεν, ἔκλυσιν
μόνην ἂν ἐλθεῖν τοῦδε τοῦ νοσήματος,
εἰ τοὺς κτανόντας Λάϊον μαθόντες εὖ
κτείναιμεν ἢ χῆς φυγάδας ἐκπεμψαίμεθα.
Σὺ δ’ οὖν φθονήσας μήτ’ ἀπ’ οἰωνῶν φάτιν,
μήτ’ εἴ τιν’ ἄλλην μαντικῆς ἔχεις ὁδόν,
ῥῦσαι σεαυτὸν καὶ πόλιν, ῥῦσαι δ’ ἐμέ,
ῥῦσαι δὲ πᾶν μίασμα τοῦ τεθνηκότος·
ἐν σοὶ γάρ ἐσμεν· ἄνδρα δ’ ὠφελεῖν ἀφ’ ὧν
ἔχοι τε καὶ δύναιτο κάλλιστος πόνων.

ΤΕΙΡΕΣΙΑΣ
Φεῦ φεῦ, φρονεῖν ὡς δεινὸν ἔνθα μὴ τέλη
λύῃ φρονοῦντι· ταῦτα γὰρ καλῶς ἐγὼ
εἰδὼς διώλεσ’· οὐ γὰρ ἂν δεῦρ’ ἱκόμην.

ΟΙ. Τί δ’ ἔστιν; ὡς ἄθυμος εἰσελήλυθας.
ΤΕ. Ἄφες μ’ ἐς οἴκους· ῥᾷστα γὰρ τὸ σόν τε σὺ
κἀγὼ διοίσω τοὐμόν, ἢν ἐμοὶ πίθῃ.

ΟΙ. Οὔτ’ ἔννομ’ εἶπας οὔτε προσφιλῆ πόλει
τῇδ’ ἥ σ’ ἔθρεψε, τήνδ’ ἀποστερῶν φάτιν.

ΤΕ. Ὁρῶ γὰρ οὐδὲ σοὶ τὸ σὸν φώνημ’ ἰὸν
πρὸς καιρόν· ὡς οὖν μηδ’ ἐγὼ ταὐτὸν πάθω -

ΟΙ. Μή, πρὸς θεῶν, φρονῶν γ’ ἀποστραφῇς ἐπεὶ
πάντες σε προσκυνοῦμεν οἵδ’ ἱκτήριοι.

ΤΕ. Πάντες γὰρ οὐ φρονεῖτ’· ἐγὼ δ’ οὐ μή ποτε
τἄμ’, ὡς ἂν εἴπω μὴ τὰ σ’, ἐκφήνω κακά.
ΟΙ. Τί φῄς; ξυνειδὼς οὐ φράσεις, ἀλλ’ ἐννοεῖς
ἡμᾶς προδοῦναι καὶ καταφθεῖραι πόλιν;

ΤΕ. Ἐγὼ οὔτ’ ἐμαυτὸν οὔτε σ’ ἀλγυνῶ· τί ταῦτ’
ἄλλως ἐλέγχεις; οὐ γὰρ ἂν πύθοιό μου.

ΟΙ. Οὐκ, ὦ κακῶν κάκιστε, καὶ γὰρ ἂν πέτρου
φύσιν σύ γ’ ὀργάνειας, ἐξερεῖς ποτε,
ἀλλ’ ὠδ’ ἄτεγκτος κἀτελεύτητος φανῇ;

ΤΕ. Ὀργὴν ἐμέμψω τὴν ἐμήν, τὴν σὴν δ’ ὁμοῦ
ναίουσαν οὐ κατεῖδες, ἀλλ’ ἐμὲ ψέγεις.

ΟΙ. Τίς γὰρ τοιαῦτ’ ἂν οὐκ ἂν ὀργίζοιτ’ ἔπη

κλύων ἃ νῦν σὺ τήνδ’ ἀτιμάζεις πόλιν;

ΤΕ. Ἥξει γὰρ αὐτά, κἂν ἐγὼ σιγῇ στέγω.

ΟΙ. Οὐκοῦν ἄ γ’ ἥξει καὶ σὲ χρὴ λέγειν ἐμοί.

ΤΕ. Οὐκ ἂν πέρα φράσαιμι· πρὸς τάδ’, εἰ θέλεις,
θυμοῦ δι’ ὀργῆς ἥτις ἀγριωτάτη.
ΟΙ. Καὶ μὴν παρήσω γ’ οὐδέν, ὡς ὀργῆς ἔχω,
ἅπερ ξυνίημ’. Ἴσθι γὰρ δοκῶν ἐμοὶ
καὶ ξυμφυτεῦσαι τοὔργον, εἰργάσθαι θ’, ὅσον
μὴ χερσὶ καίνων· εἰ δ’ ἐτύγχανες βλέπων,
καὶ τοὔργον ἂν σοῦ τοῦτ’ ἔφην εἶναι μόνου.
ΤΕ. Ἀληθες; ἐννέπω σὲ τῷ κηρύγματι
ᾧπερ προεῖπας ἐμμένειν, κἀφ’ ἡμέρας
τῆς νῦν προσαυδᾶν μήτε τούσδε μήτ’ ἐμέ,
ὡς ὄντι γῆς τῆσδ’ ἀνοσίῳ μιάστορι.

ΟΙ. Οὕτως ἀναιδῶς ἐξεκίνησας τόδε
τὸ ῥῆμα, καὶ ποῦ τοῦτο φεύξεσθαι δοκεῖς;

ΤΕ. Πέφευγα· τἀληθὲς γὰρ ἰσχῦον τρέφω.

ΟΙ. Πρὸς τοῦ διδαχθείς; οὐ γὰρ ἔκ γε τῆς τέχνης.

ΤΕ. Πρὸς σοῦ· σὺ γάρ μ’ ἄκοντα προὐτρέψω λέγειν.

ΟΙ. Ποῖον λόγον; λέγ’ αὖθις, ὡς μᾶλλον μάθω.
ΤΕ. Οὐχὶ ξυνῆκας πρόσθεν; ἢ ‘κπειρᾷ λέγειν;

ΟΙ. Οὐχ ὥστε γ’ εἰπεῖν γνωστόν· ἀλλ’ αὖθις φράσον.

ΤΕ. Φονέα σέ φημι τἀνδρὸς οὗ ζητεῖς κυρεῖν.

ΟΙ. Ἀλλ’ οὔ τι χαίρων δίς γε πημονὰς ἐρεῖς.

ΤΕ. Εἴπω τι δῆτα κἄλλ’, ἵν’ ὀργίζῃ πλέον;
ΟΙ. Ὅσον γε χρῄζεις· ὡς μάτην εἰρήσεται.

ΤΕ. Λελῃθέναι σέ φημι σὺν τοῖς φιλτάτοις
αἴσχισθ’ ὁμιλοῦντ’, οὐδ’ ὁρᾶν ἵν’ εἶ κακοῦ.

ΟΙ. Ἦ καὶ γεγηθὼς ταῦτ’ ἀεὶ λέξειν δοκεῖς;

ΤΕ. Εἴπερ τί γ’ ἔστι τῆς ἀληθείας σθένος.
ΟΙ. Ἀλλ’ ἔστι, πλὴν σοί· σοὶ δὲ τοῦτ’ οὐκ ἔστ’, ἐπεὶ
τυφλὸς τά τ’ ὦτα τόν τε νοῦν τά τ’ ὄμματ’ εἶ.

ΤΕ. Σὺ δ’ ἄθλιός γε ταῦτ’ ὀνειδίζων ἃ σοὶ
οὐδεὶς ὃς οὐχὶ τῶνδ’ ὀνειδιεῖ τάχα.

ΟΙ. Μιᾶς τρέφῃ πρὸς νυκτός, ὥστε μήτ’ ἐμὲ
μήτ’ ἄλλον ὅστις φῶς ὁρᾷ βλάψαι ποτ’ ἄν.

ΤΕ. Οὐ γάρ με μοῖρα πρός γε σοῦ πεσεῖν, ἐπεὶ
ἱκανὸς Ἀπόλλων ᾧ τάδ’ ἐκπρᾶξαι μέλει.

ΟΙ. Κρέοντος ἢ σοῦ ταῦτα τἀξευρήματα;

ΤΕ. Κρέων δέ σοι πῆμ’ οὐδέν, ἀλλ’ αὐτὸς σὺ σοί.
ΟΙ. Ὦ πλοῦτε καὶ τυραννὶ καὶ τέχνη τέχνης
ὑπερφέρουσα, τῷ πολυζήλῳ βίῳ
ὅσος παρ’ ὑμῖν ὁ φθόνος φυλάσσεται,
εἰ τῆσδέ γ’ ἀρχῆς οὕνεχ’, ἣν ἐμοὶ πόλις
δωρητόν, οὐκ αἰτητόν, εἰσεχείρισεν,
ταύτης Κρέων ὁ πιστός, οὐξ ἀρχῆς φίλος,
λάθρᾳ μ’ ὑπελθὼν ἐκβαλεῖν ἱμείρεται,
ὑφεὶς μάγον τοιόνδε μηχανορράφον,
δόλιον ἀγύρτην, ὅστις ἐν τοῖς κέρδεσιν
μόνον δέδορκε, τὴν τέχνην δ’ ἔφυ τυφλός.

Ἐπεί, φέρ’ εἰπέ, ποῦ σὺ μάντις εἶ σαφής;
πῶς οὐχ, ὅθ’ ἡ ῥαψῳδὸς ἐνθάδ’ ἦν κύων,
ηὔδας τι τοῖσδ’ ἀστοῖσιν ἐκλυτήριον;
Καίτοι τό γ’ αἴνιγμ’ οὐχὶ τοὐπιόντος ἦν
ἀνδρὸς διειπεῖν, ἀλλὰ μαντείας ἔδει·
ἣν οὔτ’ ἀπ’ οἰωνῶν σὺ προὐφάνης ἔχων
οὔτ’ ἐκ θεῶν του γνωτόν· ἀλλ’ ἐγὼ μολών,
ὁ μηδὲν εἰδὼς Οἰδίπους, ἔπαυσά νιν,
γνώμῃ κυρήσας οὐδ’ ἀπ’ οἰωνῶν μαθών·
ὃν δὴ σὺ πειρᾷς ἐκβαλεῖν, δοκῶν θρόνοις
παραστατήσειν τοῖς Κρεοντείοις πέλας.
Κλαίων δοκεῖς μοι καὶ σὺ χὠ συνθεὶς τάδε
ἀγηλατήσειν· εἰ δὲ μὴ ‘δόκεις γέρων
εἶναι, παθὼν ἔγνως ἂν οἷά περ φρονεῖς.

ΧΟ. Ἡμῖν μὲν εἰκάζουσι καὶ τὰ τοῦδ’ ἔπη
ὀργῇ λελέχθαι καὶ τὰ σ’, Οἰδίπου, δοκεῖ.
Δεῖ δ’ οὐ τοιούτων, ἀλλ’ ὅπως τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ
μαντεῖ’ ἄριστα λύσομεν, τόδε σκοπεῖν.

ΤΕ. Εἰ καὶ τυραννεῖς, ἐξισωτέον τὸ γοῦν
ἴσ’ ἀντιλέξαι· τοῦδε γὰρ κἀγὼ κρατῶ·
οὐ γάρ τι σοὶ ζῶ δοῦλος, ἀλλὰ Λοξίᾳ,
ὥστ’ οὐ Κρέοντος προστάτου γεγράψομαι.
Λέγω δ’, ἐπειδὴ καὶ τυφλόν μ’ ὠνείδισας·
σὺ καὶ δέδορκας κοὐ βλέπεις ἵν’ εἶ κακοῦ,
οὐδ’ ἔνθα ναίεις, οὐδ’ ὅτων οἰκεῖς μέτα.
Ἆρ’ οἶσθ’ ἀφ’ ὧν εἶ; καὶ λέληθας ἐχθρὸς ὢν
τοῖς σοῖσιν αὐτοῦ νέρθε κἀπὶ γῆς ἄνω.
Καί σ’ ἀμφιπλὴξ μητρός τε καὶ τοῦ σοῦ πατρὸς
ἐλᾷ ποτ’ ἐκ γῆς τῆσδε δεινόπους ἀρά,
βλέποντα νῦν μὲν ὀρθ’, ἔπειτα δὲ σκότον.
Βοῆς δὲ τῆς σῆς ποῖος οὐκ ἔσται λιμήν,
ποῖος Κιθαιρὼν οὐχὶ σύμφωνος τάχα,

ὅταν καταίσθῃ τὸν ὑμέναιον ὃν δόμοις
ἄνορμον εἰσέπλευσας εὐπλοίας τυχών;
Ἄλλων δὲ πλῆθος οὐκ ἐπαισθάνῃ κακῶν
ἃ σ’ ἐξισώσει σοί τε καὶ τοῖς σοῖς τέκνοις.
Πρὸς ταῦτα καὶ Κρέοντα καὶ τοὐμὸν στόμα
προπηλάκιζε· σοῦ γὰρ οὐκ ἔστιν βροτῶν
κάκιον ὅστις ἐκτριβήσεταί ποτε.

ΟΙ. Ἦ ταῦτα δῆτ’ ἀνεκτὰ πρὸς τούτου κλύειν;
Οὐκ εἰς ὄλεθρον; οὐχὶ θᾶσσον; οὐ πάλιν
ἄψορρος οἴκων τῶνδ’ ἀποστραφεὶς ἄπει;

ΤΕ. Οὐδ’ ἰκόμην ἔγωγ’ ἄν, εἰ σὺ μὴ ‘κάλεις.

ΟΙ. Οὐ γάρ τί σ’ ᾔδη μῶρα φωνήσοντ’, ἐπεὶ
σχολῇ σ’ ἂν οἴκους τοὺς ἐμοὺς ἐστειλάμην.
ΤΕ. Ἡμεῖς τοιοίδ’ ἔφυμεν, ὡς μὲν σοὶ δοκεῖ,
μῶροι, γονεῦσι δ’ οἵ σ’ ἔφυσαν, ἔμφρονες.

ΟΙ. Ποίοισι; μεῖνον· τίς δέ μ’ ἐκφύει βροτῶν;

ΤΕ. Ἥδ’ ἡμέρα φύσει σε καὶ διαφθερεῖ.

ΟΙ. Ὡς πάντ’ ἄγαν αἰνικτὰ κἀσαφῆ λέγεις.
ΤΕ. Οὔκουν σὺ ταῦτ’ ἄριστος εὑρίσκειν ἔφυς;

ΟΙ. Τοιαῦτ’ ὀνείδιζ’ οἷς ἔμ’ εὑρήσεις μέγαν.

ΤΕ. Αὕτη γε μέντοι σ’ ἡ τύχη διώλεσεν.

ΟΙ. Ἀλλ’ εἰ πόλιν τήνδ’ ἐξέσωσ’ οὔ μοι μέλει.

ΤΕ. Ἄπειμι τοίνυν· καὶ σύ, παῖ, κόμιζέ με.
ΟΙ. Κομιζέτω δῆθ’· ὡς παρὼν σύ γ’ ἐμποδὼν
ὀχλεῖς, συθείς τ’ ἂν οὐκ ἂν ἀλγύναις πλέον.

ΤΕ. Εἰπὼν ἄπειμ’ ὧν οὕνεκ’ ἦλθον, οὐ τὸ σὸν
δείσας πρόσωπον· οὐ γὰρ ἔσθ’ ὅπου μ’ ὀλεῖς.
Λέγω δέ σοι· τὸν ἄνδρα τοῦτον ὃν πάλαι
ζητεῖς ἀπειλῶν κἀνακηρύσσων φόνον
τὸν Λαΐειον, οὗτός ἐστιν ἐνθάδε,
ξένος λόγῳ μέτοικος, εἶτα δ’ ἐγγενὴς
φανήσεται Θηβαῖος, οὐδ’ ἡσθήσεται
τῇ ξυμφορᾷ· τυφλὸς γὰρ ἐκ δεδορκότος
καὶ πτωχὸς ἀντὶ πλουσίου ξένην ἔπι
σκήπτρῳ προδεικνὺς γαῖαν ἐμπορεύσεται.
Φανήσεται δὲ παισὶ τοῖς αὐτοῦ ξυνὼν
ἀδελφὸς αὐτὸς καὶ πατήρ, κἀξ ἧς ἔφυ
γυναικὸς υἱὸς καὶ πόσις, καὶ τοῦ πατρὸς
ὁμοσπόρος τε καὶ φονεύς. Καὶ ταῦτ’ ἰὼν
εἴσω λογίζου· κἂν λάβῃς μ’ ἐψευσμένον,
φάσκειν ἔμ’ ἤδη μαντικῇ μηδὲν φρονεῖν.

ΧΟ. Τίς ὅντιν’ ἀ θεσπιέπει-
α Δελφὶς εἶπε πέτρα Str. 1 .
ἄρρητ’ ἀρρήτων τελέσαν-
τα φοινίαισι χερσίν;
Ὥρα νιν ἀελλάδων
ἵππων σθεναρώτερον
φυγᾷ πόδα νωμᾶν·
ἔνοπλος γὰρ ἐπ’ αὐτὸν ἐπενθρῴσκει
πυρὶ καὶ στεροπαῖς ὁ Διὸς γενέτας,
δειναὶ δ’ ἅμ’ ἔπονται
Κῆρες ἀναπλάκητοι.
Ἔλαμψε γὰρ τοῦ νιφόεν-
τος ἀρτίως φανεῖσα Ant. 1 .
φάμα Παρνασσοῦ τὸν ἄδη-
λον ἄνδρα πάντ’ ἰχνεύειν·
φοιτᾷ γὰρ ὑπ’ ἀγρίαν
ὕλαν ἀνά τ’ ἄντρα καὶ
πέτρας ἅτε ταῦρος,
μέλεος μελέῳ ποδὶ χηρεύων,
τὰ μεσόμφαλα γᾶς ἀπονοσφίζων
μαντεῖα· τὰ δ’ αἰεὶ
ζῶντα περιποτᾶται.
Δεινὰ μὲν οὖν, δεινὰ ταράσ-Str. 2 .
σει σοφὸς οἰωνοθέτας,
οὔτε δοκοῦντ’ οὔτ’ ἀποφάσ-
κονθ’· ὅ τι λέξω δ’ ἀπορῶ·
πέτομαι δ’ ἐλπίσιν οὔτ’ ἐν-
θάδ’ ὁρῶν οὔτ’ ὀπίσω.
Τί γὰρ ἢ Λαβδακίδαις
ἢ τῷ Πολύβου νεῖκος ἔ-
κειτ’; Οὔτε πάροιθέν ποτ’ ἔ-
γωγ’ οὔτε τανῦν πω
ἔμαθον πρὸς ὅτου δὴ βασάνῳ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑
ἐπὶ τὰν ἐπίδαμον
φάτιν εἶμ’ Οἰδιπόδα Λαβδακίδαις
ἐπίκουρος ἀδήλων θανάτων.

Ἀλλ’ ὁ μὲν οὖν Ζεὺς ὅ τ’ Ἀπόλ-Ant. 2 .
λων ξυνετοὶ καὶ τὰ βροτῶν
εἰδότες· ἀνδρῶν δ’ ὅτι μάν-
500 τις πλέον ἢ ‘γὼ φέρεται,
κρίσις οὐκ ἔστιν ἀληθής·
σοφίᾳ δ’ ἂν σοφίαν
παραμείψειεν ἀνήρ·
ἄλλ’ οὔποτ’ ἔγωγ’ ἄν, πρὶν ἴ-
505 δοιμ’ ὀρθὸν ἔπος, μεμφομέ-
νων ἂν καταφαίην.
Φανερὰ γὰρ ἐπ’ αὐτῷ πτερόεσσ’ ἦλθε κόρα
ποτέ, καὶ σοφὸς ὤφθη
510 βασάνῳ θ’ ἀδύπολις· τῷ ἀπ’ ἐμᾶς
φρενὸς οὔποτ’ ὀφλήσει κακίαν.

ΚΡ. Ἄνδρες πολῖται, δείν’ ἔπη πεπυσμένος
κατηγορεῖν μου τὸν τύραννον Οἰδίπουν,
515 πάρειμ’ ἀτλητῶν. Εἰ γὰρ ἐν ταῖς ξυμφοραῖς
ταῖς νῦν νομίζει πρός γ’ ἐμοῦ πεπονθέναι
λόγοισιν εἴτ’ ἔργοισιν εἰς βλάβην φέρον,
οὔτοι βίου μοι τοῦ μακραίωνος πόθος,
φέροντι τήνδε βάξιν. Οὐ γὰρ εἰς ἁπλοῦν
520 ἡ ζημία μοι τοῦ λόγου τούτου φέρει,
ἀλλ’ ἐς μέγιστον, εἰ κακὸς μὲν ἐν πόλει,
κακὸς δὲ πρὸς σοῦ καὶ φίλων κεκλήσομαι.

ΧΟ. Ἀλλ’ ἦλθε μὲν δὴ τοῦτο τοὔνειδος τάχ’ ἂν
ὀργῇ βιασθὲν μᾶλλον ἢ γνώμῃ φρενῶν.
525 ΚΡ. Τοὔπος δ’ ἐφάνθη ταῖς ἐμαῖς γνώμαις ὅτι
πεισθεὶς ὁ μάντις τοὺς λόγους ψευδεῖς λέγοι;

ΧΟ. Ηὐδᾶτο μὲν τάδ’, οἶδα δ’ οὐ γνώμῃ τίνι.

ΚΡ. Ἐξ ὀμμάτων δ’ ὀρθῶν τε κἀξ ὀρθῆς φρενὸς
κατηγορεῖτο τοὐπίκλημα τοῦτό μου;
ΧΟ. Οὐκ οἶδ’· ἃ γὰρ δρῶσ’ οἱ κρατοῦντες οὐχ ὁρῶ.
Αὐτὸς δ’ ὅδ’ ἤδη δωμάτων ἔξω περᾷ.

ΟΙ. Οὗτος σύ, πῶς δεῦρ’ ἦλθες; ἢ τοσόνδ’ ἔχεις
τόλμης πρόσωπον ὥστε τὰς ἐμὰς στέγας
ἵκου, φονεὺς ὢν τοῦδε τἀνδρὸς ἐμφανῶς
λῃστής τ’ ἐναργὴς τῆς ἐμῆς τυραννίδος;
Φέρ’ εἰπὲ πρὸς θεῶν, δειλίαν ἢ μωρίαν
ἰδών τιν’ ἔν μοι ταῦτ’ ἐβουλεύσω ποεῖν;
ἢ τοὔργον ὡς οὐ γνωρίσοιμί σου τόδε
δόλῳ προσέρπον κοὐκ ἀλεξοίμην μαθών;
Ἆρ’ οὐχὶ μῶρόν ἐστι τοὐγχείρημά σου,
ἄνευ τε πλήθους καὶ φίλων τυραννίδα
θηρᾶν, ὃ πλήθει χρήμασίν θ’ ἁλίσκεται;

ΚΡ. Οἶσθ’ ὡς πόησον; ἀντὶ τῶν εἰρημένων
ἴσ’ ἀντάκουσον, κἆτα κρῖν’ αὐτὸς μαθών.
ΟΙ. Λέγειν σὺ δεινός, μανθάνειν δ’ ἐγὼ κακὸς
σοῦ· δυσμενῆ γὰρ καὶ βαρύν σ’ εὕρηκ’ ἐμοί.

ΚΡ. Τοῦτ’ αὐτὸ νῦν μου πρῶτ’ ἄκουσον ὡς ἐρῶ.

ΟΙ. Τοῦτ’ αὐτὸ μή μοι φράζ’ ὅπως οὐκ εἶ κακός.

ΚΡ. Εἴ τοι νομίζεις κτῆμα τὴν αὐθαδίαν
εἶναί τι τοῦ νοῦ χωρίς, οὐκ ὀρθῶς φρονεῖς.

ΟΙ. Εἴ τοι νομίζεις ἄνδρα συγγενῆ κακῶς
δρῶν οὐχ ὑφέξειν τὴν δίκην, οὐκ εὖ φρονεῖς.

ΚΡ. Ξύμφημί σοι ταῦτ’ ἔνδικ’ εἰρῆσθαι· τὸ δὲ
πάθημ’ ὁποῖον φῂς παθεῖν δίδασκέ με.
ΟΙ. Ἔπειθες ἢ οὐκ ἔπειθες ὡς χρείη μ’ ἐπὶ
τὸν σεμνόμαντιν ἄνδρα πέμψασθαί τινα;

ΚΡ. Καὶ νῦν ἔθ’ αὐτός εἰμι τῷ βουλεύματι.

ΟΙ. Πόσον τιν’ ἤδη δῆθ’ ὁ Λάϊος χρόνον -

ΚΡ. Δέδρακε ποῖον ἔργον; οὐ γὰρ ἐννοῶ.
ΟΙ. ἄφαντος ἔρρει θανασίμῳ χειρώματι;

ΚΡ. Μακροὶ παλαιοί τ’ ἂν μετρηθεῖεν χρόνοι.

ΟΙ. Τότ’ οὖν ὁ μάντις οὗτος ἦν ἐν τῇ τέχνῃ;

ΚΡ. Σοφός γ’ ὁμοίως κἀξ ἴσου τιμώμενος.

ΟΙ. Ἐμνήσατ’ οὖν ἐμοῦ τι τῷ τότ’ ἐν χρόνῳ;
ΚΡ. Οὔκουν ἐμοῦ γ’ ἐστῶτος οὐδαμοῦ πέλας.

ΟΙ. Ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἔρευναν τοῦ θανόντος ἔσχετε;

ΚΡ. Παρέσχομεν, πῶς δ’ οὐχί; κοὐκ ἐκύρσαμεν.

ΟΙ. Πῶς οὖν τόθ’ οὗτος ὁ σοφὸς οὐκ ηὔδα τάδε;

ΚΡ. Οὐκ οἶδ’· ἐφ’ οἷς γὰρ μὴ φρονῶ σιγᾶν φιλῶ.
ΟΙ. Τοσόνδε γ’ οἶσθα καὶ λέγοις ἂν εὖ φρονῶν -

ΚΡ. Ποῖον τόδ’; εἰ γὰρ οἶδά γ’, οὐκ ἀρνήσομαι.

ΟΙ. ὁθούνεκ’, εἰ μὴ σοὶ ξυνῆλθε, τὰς ἐμὰς
οὐκ ἄν ποτ’ εἶπεν Λαΐου διαφθοράς.

ΚΡ. Εἰ μὲν λέγει τάδ’, αὐτὸς οἶσθ’· ἐγὼ δὲ σοῦ
μαθεῖν δικαιῶ ταὔθ’ ἅπερ κἀμοῦ σὺ νῦν.

ΟΙ. Ἐκμάνθαν’· οὐ γὰρ δὴ φονεὺς ἁλώσομαι.

ΚΡ. Τί δῆτ’; ἀδελφὴν τὴν ἐμὴν γήμας ἔχεις;

ΟΙ. Ἄρνησις οὐκ ἔνεστιν ὧν ἀνιστορεῖς.

ΚΡ. Ἄρχεις δ’ ἐκείνῃ ταὐτὰ γῆς ἴσον νέμων;
ΟΙ. Ἂν ᾗ θέλουσα πάντ’ ἐμοῦ κομίζεται.

ΚΡ. Οὔκουν ἰσοῦμαι σφῷν ἐγὼ δυοῖν τρίτος;

ΟΙ. Ἐνταῦθα γὰρ δὴ καὶ κακὸς φαίνῃ φίλος.

ΚΡ. Οὔκ, εἰ διδοίης γ’ ὡς ἔχω σαυτῷ λόγον.
Σκέψαι δὲ τοῦτο πρῶτον, εἴ τιν’ ἂν δοκεῖς
ἄρχειν ἑλέσθαι ξὺν φόβοισι μᾶλλον ἢ
ἄτρεστον εὕδοντ’, εἰ τά γ’ αὔθ’ ἕξει κράτη.
Ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν οὔτ’ αὐτὸς ἱμείρων ἔφυν
τύραννος εἶναι μᾶλλον ἢ τύραννα δρᾶν,

οὔτ’ ἄλλος ὅστις σωφρονεῖν ἐπίσταται.
Νῦν μὲν γὰρ ἐκ σοῦ πάντ’ ἄνευ φόβου φέρω·
εἰ δ’ αὐτὸς ἦρχον, πολλὰ κἂν ἄκων ἔδρων.
Πῶς δῆτ’ ἐμοὶ τυραννὶς ἡδίων ἔχειν
ἀρχῆς ἀλύπου καὶ δυναστείας ἔφυ;
Οὔπω τοσοῦτον ἠπατημένος κυρῶ
ὥστ’ ἄλλα χρῄζειν ἢ τὰ σὺν κέρδει καλά.
Νῦν πᾶσι χαίρω, νῦν με πᾶς ἀσπάζεται,
νῦν οἱ σέθεν χρῄζοντες ἐκκαλοῦσί με·
τὸ γὰρ τυχεῖν αὐτοῖσι πᾶν ἐνταῦθ’ ἔνι.
Πῶς δῆτ’ ἐγὼ κεῖν’ ἂν λάβοιμ’ ἀφεὶς τάδε;
οὐκ ἂν γένοιτο νοῦς κακὸς καλῶς φρονῶν.
Ἀλλ’ οὔτ’ ἐραστὴς τῆσδε τῆς γνώμης ἔφυν,
οὔτ’ ἂν μετ’ ἄλλου δρῶντος ἂν τλαίην ποτέ.
Καὶ τῶνδ’ ἔλεγχον, τοῦτο μὲν Πυθώδ’ ἰών,
πεύθου τὰ χρησθέντ’ εἰ σαφῶς ἤγγειλά σοι·
τοῦτ’ ἄλλ’, ἐάν με τῷ τερασκόπῳ λάβῃς
κοινῇ τι βουλεύσαντα, μή μ’ ἁπλῇ κτάνῃς
ψήφῳ, διπλῇ δὲ, τῇ τ’ ἐμῇ καὶ σῇ, λαβών,
γνώμῃ δ’ ἀδήλῳ μή με χωρὶς αἰτιῶ.
Οὐ γὰρ δίκαιον οὔτε τοὺς κακοὺς μάτην
χρηστοὺς νομίζειν οὔτε τοὺς χρηστοὺς κακούς.
Φίλον γὰρ ἐσθλὸν ἐκβαλεῖν ἴσον λέγω
καὶ τὸν παρ’ αὐτῷ βίοτον, ὃν πλεῖστον φιλεῖ.
Ἀλλ’ ἐν χρόνῳ γνώσῃ τάδ’ ἀσφαλῶς, ἐπεὶ
χρόνος δίκαιον ἄνδρα δείκνυσιν μόνος·
κακὸν δὲ κἂν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ γνοίης μιᾷ.

ΧΟ. Καλῶς ἔλεξεν εὐλαβουμένῳ πεσεῖν,
ἄναξ· φρονεῖν γὰρ οἱ ταχεῖς οὐκ ἀσφαλεῖς.

ΟΙ. Ὅταν ταχύς τις οὐπιβουλεύων λάθρᾳ
χωρῇ, ταχὺν δεῖ κἀμὲ βουλεύειν πάλιν.
Εἰ δ’ ἡσυχάζων προσμενῶ, τὰ τοῦδε μὲν

πεπραγμέν’ ἔσται, τἀμὰ δ’ ἡμαρτημένα.

ΚΡ. Τί δῆτα χρῄζεις; ἦ με γῆς ἔξω βαλεῖν;

ΟΙ. Ἥκιστα· θνῄσκειν, οὐ φυγεῖν σε βούλομαι.

ΚΡ. Ὅταν προδείξῃς ‹γ’› οἷόν ἐστι τὸ φθονεῖν.
625 ΟΙ. Ὡς οὐχ ὑπείξων οὐδὲ πιστεύσων λέγεις;

ΚΡ. Οὐ γὰρ φρονοῦντά σ’ εὖ βλέπω.

ΟΙ. Τὸ γοῦν ἐμόν.

ΚΡ. Ἀλλ’ ἐξ ἴσου δεῖ κἀμόν.

ΟΙ. Ἀλλ’ ἔφυς κακός.

ΚΡ. Εἰ δὲ ξυνίης μηδέν;

ΟΙ. Ἀρκτέον γ’ ὅμως.

ΚΡ. Οὗτοι κακῶς γ’ ἄρχοντος.

ΟΙ. Ὦ πόλις, πόλις.
630 ΚΡ. Κἀμοὶ πόλεως μέτεστιν, οὐχὶ σοὶ μόνῳ.

ΧΟ. Παύσασθ’, ἄνακτες· καιρίαν δ’ ὑμῖν ὁρῶ
τήνδ’ ἐκ δόμων στείχουσαν Ἰοκάστην, μεθ’ ἧς
τὸ νῦν παρεστὼς νεῖκος εὖ θέσθαι χρεών.

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ
Τί τὴν ἄβουλον, ὦ ταλαίπωροι, στάσιν
635 γλώσσης ἐπήρασθ’, οὐδ’ ἐπαισχύνεσθε γῆς
οὕτω νοσούσης ἴδια κινοῦντες κακά;
Οὐκ εἶ σύ τ’ οἶκους σύ τε, Κρέων, κατὰ στέγας,
καὶ μὴ τὸ μηδὲν ἄλγος εἰς μέγ’ οἴσετε;

ΚΡ. Ὄμαιμε, δεινά μ’ Οἰδίπους, ὁ σὸς πόσις,
640 δρᾶσαι δικαιοῖ, δυοῖν ἀποκρίνας κακοῖν,
ἢ γῆς ἀπῶσαι πατρίδος ἢ κτεῖναι λαβών.

ΟΙ. Ξύμφημι· δρῶντα γάρ νιν, ὦ γύναι, κακῶς
εἴληφα τοὐμὸν σῶμα σὺν τέχνῃ κακῇ.

ΚΡ. Μὴ νῦν ὀναίμην, ἀλλ’ ἀραῖος, εἴ σέ τι
δέδρακ’, ὀλοίμην, ὧν ἐπαιτιᾷ με δρᾶν.

ΙΟ. Ὦ πρὸς θεῶν πίστευσον, Οἰδίπους, τάδε,
μάλιστα μὲν τόνδ’ ὅρκον αἰδεσθεὶς θεῶν,
ἔπειτα κἀμὲ τούσδε θ’ οἳ πάρεισί σοι.

ΧΟ. Πιθοῦ θελήσας φρονήσας τ’, ἄναξ, λίσσομαι. Str.

ΟΙ. Τί σοι θέλεις δῆτ’ εἰκάθω;

ΧΟ. Τὸν οὔτε πρὶν νήπιον νῦν τ’ ἐν ὅρ-
κῳ μέγαν καταίδεσαι.

ΟΙ. Οἶσθ’ οὖν ἃ χρῄζεις;
ΧΟ. Οἶδα.

ΟΙ. Φράζε δὴ τί φῄς.

ΧΟ. Τὸν ἐναγῆ φίλον μήποτ’ ἐν αἰτίᾳ

σὺν ἀφανεῖ λόγῳ ‹σ’› ἄτιμον βαλεῖν.

ΟΙ. Εὖ νυν ἐπίστω, ταῦθ’ ὅταν ζητῇς, ἐμοὶ
ζητῶν ὄλεθρον ἢ φυγεῖν ἐκ τῆσδε γῆς.
660 ΧΟ. Οὐ τὸν πάντων θεῶν θεὸν πρόμον
Ἅλιον· ἐπεὶ ἄθεος ἄφιλος ὅ τι πύματον
ὀλοίμαν, φρόνησιν εἰ τάνδ’ ἔχω.
665 Ἀλλά μοι δυσμόρῳ γᾶ φθίνουσα τρύχει
ψυχάν, τάδ’ εἰ κακοῖς κακὰ
προσάψει τοῖς πάλαι τὰ πρὸς σφῷν.

ΟΙ. Ὁ δ’ οὖν ἴτω, κεἰ χρή με παντελῶς θανεῖν
670 ἢ γῆς ἄτιμον τῆσδ’ ἀπωσθῆναι βίᾳ·
τὸ γὰρ σόν, οὐ τὸ τοῦδ’, ἐποικτίρω στόμα
ἐλεινόν· οὗτος δ’ ἔνθ’ ἂν ᾖ στυγήσεται.

ΚΡ. Στυγνὸς μὲν εἴκων δῆλος εἶ, βαρὺς δ’, ὅταν
θυμοῦ περάσῃς· αἱ δὲ τοιαῦται φύσεις
675 αὐταῖς δικαίως εἰσὶν ἄλγισται φέρειν.

ΟΙ. Οὔκουν μ’ ἐάσεις κἀκτὸς εἶ;

ΚΡ. Πορεύσομαι,
σοῦ μὲν τυχὼν ἀγνῶτος, ἐν δὲ τοῖσδ’ ἴσος.

ΧΟ. Γύναι, τί μέλλεις κομίζειν δόμων τόνδ’ ἔσω; Ant.
ΙΟ. Μαθοῦσά γ’ ἥτις ἡ τύχη.

ΧΟ. Δόκησις ἀγνὼς λόγων ἦλθε, δά-
πτει δὲ καὶ τὸ μὴ ‘νδικον.

ΙΟ. Ἀμφοῖν ἀπ’ αὐτοῖν;

ΧΟ. Ναίχι.

ΙΟ. Καὶ τίς ἦν λόγος;
ΧΟ. Ἅλις ἔμοιγ’ ἅλις, γᾶς προπονουμένας,
φαίνεται ἔνθ’ ἔληξεν, αὐτοῦ μένειν.

ΟΙ. Ὁρᾷς ἵν’ ἥκεις, ἀγαθὸς ὢν γνώμην ἀνήρ,
τοὐμὸν παριεὶς καὶ καταμβλύνων κέαρ;

ΧΟ. Ὦναξ, εἶπον μὲν οὐχ ἅπαξ μόνον,
ἴσθι δὲ παραφρόνιμον ἄπορον ἐπὶ φρόνιμα
πεφάνθαι μ’ ἄν, εἴ σε νοσφίζομαι,
ὅς γ’ ἐμὰν γᾶν φίλαν ἐν πόνοις ἁλοῦσαν
– – κατ’ ὀρθὸν οὖρισας·
τανῦν δ’ εὔπομπος, εἰ δύνᾳ, γενοῦ.

ΙΟ. Πρὸς θεῶν δίδαξον κἄμ’, ἄναξ, ὅτου ποτὲ
μῆνιν τοσήνδε πράγματος στήσας ἔχεις.
ΟΙ. Ἐρῶ - σὲ γὰρ τῶνδ’ ἐς πλέον, γύναι, σέβω -
Κρέοντος, οἷά μοι βεβουλευκὼς ἔχει.

ΙΟ. Λέγ’, εἰ σαφῶς τὸ νεῖκος ἐγκαλῶν ἐρεῖς.

ΟΙ. Φονέα μέ φησι Λαΐου καθεστάναι.

ΙΟ. Αὐτὸς ξυνειδὼς ἢ μαθὼν ἄλλου πάρα;
ΟΙ. Μάντιν μὲν οὖν κακοῦργον εἰσπέμψας, ἐπεὶ
τό γ’ εἰς ἑαυτὸν πᾶν ἐλευθεροῖ στόμα.

ΙΟ. Σύ νυν ἀφεὶς σεαυτὸν ὧν λέγεις πέρι
ἐμοῦ ‘πάκουσον καὶ μάθ’ οὕνεκ’ ἐστί σοι
βρότειον οὐδὲν μαντικῆς ἔχον τέχνης·
ΟΙ. φανῶ δέ σοι σημεῖα τῶνδε σύντομα·
χρησμὸς γὰρ ἦλθε Λαΐῳ ποτ’, οὐκ ἐρῶ
Φοίβου γ’ ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ, τῶν δ’ ὑπηρετῶν ἄπο,
ὡς αὐτὸν ἥξοι μοῖρα πρὸς παιδὸς θανεῖν
ὅστις γένοιτ’ ἐμοῦ τε κἀκείνου πάρα.
ΟΙ. Καὶ τὸν μέν, ὥσπερ γ’ ἡ φάτις, ξένοι ποτὲ
λῃσταὶ φονεύουσ’ ἐν τριπλαῖς ἀμαξιτοῖς·
παιδὸς δὲ βλάστας οὐ διέσχον ἡμέραι
τρεῖς, καί νιν ἄρθρα κεῖνος ἐνζεύξας ποδοῖν
ἔρριψεν ἄλλων χερσὶν εἰς ἄβατον ὄρος.
ΟΙ. Κἀνταῦθ’ Ἀπόλλων οὔτ’ ἐκεῖνον ἤνυσεν
φονέα γενέσθαι πατρός, οὔτε Λάϊον,

τὸ δεινὸν οὐφοβεῖτο, πρὸς παιδὸς θανεῖν.
Τοιαῦτα φῆμαι μαντικαὶ διώρισαν,
ὧν ἐντρέπου σὺ μηδέν· ὧν γὰρ ἂν θεὸς
725 χρείαν ἐρευνᾷ, ῥᾳδίως αὐτὸς φανεῖ.

ΟΙ. Οἷόν μ’ ἀκούσαντ’ ἀτίως ἔχει, γύναι,
ψυχῆς πλάνημα κἀνακίνησις φρενῶν.

ΙΟ. Ποίας μερίμνης τοῦθ’ ὑποστραφεὶς λέγεις;

ΟΙ. Ἔδοξ’ ἀκοῦσαι σοῦ τόδ’, ὡς ὁ Λάϊος
730 κατασφαγείη πρὸς τριπλαῖς ἁμαξιτοῖς.

ΙΟ. Ηὐδᾶτο γὰρ ταῦτ’ οὐδέ πω λήξαντ’ ἔχει.

ΟΙ. Καὶ ποῦ ‘σθ’ ὁ χῶρος οὗτος, οὗ τόδ’ ἦν πάθος;

ΙΟ. Φωκὶς μὲν ἡ γῆ κλῄζεται, σχιστὴ δ’ ὁδὸς
ἐς ταὐτὸ Δελφῶν κἀπὸ Δαυλίας ἄγει.
735 ΟΙ. Καὶ τίς χρόνος τοῖσδ’ ἐστὶν οὐξεληλυθώς;

ΙΟ. Σχεδόν τι πρόσθεν ἢ σὺ τῆσδ’ ἔχων χθονὸς
ἀρχὴν ἐφαίνου, τοῦτ’ ἐκηρύχθη πόλει.

ΟΙ. Ὦ Ζεῦ, τί μου δρᾶσαι βεβούλευσαι πέρι;

ΙΟ. Τί δ’ ἐστί σοι τοῦτ’, Οἰδίπους, ἐνθύμιον;
ΟΙ. Μήπω μ’ ἐρώτα· τὸν δὲ Λάϊον φύσιν
τίν’ εἶχε φράζε, τίνα δ’ ἀκμὴν ἥβης ἔχων.

ΙΟ. Μέγας, χνοάζων ἄρτι λευκανθὲς κάρα,
μορφῆς δὲ τῆς σῆς οὐκ ἀπεστάτει πολύ.

ΟΙ. Οἴμοι τάλας· ἔοικ’ ἐμαυτὸν εἰς ἀρὰς
δεινὰς προβάλλων ἀρτίως οὐκ εἰδέναι.

ΙΟ. Πῶς φῄς; ὀκνῶ τοι πρὸς σ’ ἀποσκοποῦσ’, ἄναξ.

ΟΙ. Δεινῶς ἀθυμῶ μὴ βλέπων ὁ μάντις ᾖ.
Δείξεις δὲ μᾶλλον, ἢν ἓν ἐξείπῃς ἔτι.

ΙΟ. Καὶ μὴν ὀκνῶ μέν, ἃ δ’ ἂν ἔρῃ μαθοῦσ’ ἐρῶ.
ΟΙ. Πότερον ἐχώρει βαιός, ἢ πολλοὺς ἔχων
ἄνδρας λοχίτας, οἷ’ ἀνὴρ ἀρχηγέτης;

ΙΟ. Πέντ’ ἦσαν οἱ ξύμπαντες, ἐν δ’ αὐτοῖσιν ἦν
κῆρυξ· ἀπήνη δ’ ἦγε Λάϊον μία.

ΟΙ. Αἰαῖ, τάδ’ ἤδη διαφανῆ. Τίς ἦν ποτε
ὁ τούσδε λέξας τοὺς λόγους ὑμῖν, γύναι;

ΙΟ. Οἰκεύς τις, ὅσπερ ἵκετ’ ἐκσωθεὶς μόνος.

ΟΙ. Ἦ κἀν δόμοισι τυγχάνει τανῦν παρών;

ΙΟ. Οὐ δῆτ’· ἀφ’ οὗ γὰρ κεῖθεν ἦλθε καὶ κράτη
σέ τ’ εἶδ’ ἔχοντα Λάϊόν τ’ ὀλωλότα,
ἐξικέτευσε τῆς ἐμῆς χειρὸς θιγὼν
ἀγρούς σφε πέμψαι κἀπὶ ποιμνίων νομάς,
ὡς πλεῖστον εἴη τοῦδ’ ἄποπτος ἄστεως.
Κἄπεμψ’ ἐγώ νιν· ἄξιος γὰρ οἶ’ ἀνὴρ
δοῦλος φέρειν ἦν τῆσδε καὶ μείζω χάριν.
ΟΙ. Πῶς ἂν μόλοι δῆθ’ ἡμὶν ἐν τάχει πάλιν;

ΙΟ. Πάρεστιν. Ἀλλὰ πρὸς τί τοῦτ’ ἐφίεσαι;

ΟΙ. Δέδοικ’ ἐμαυτόν, ὦ γύναι, μὴ πόλλ’ ἄγαν
εἰρημέν’ ᾖ μοι, δι’ ἃ νιν εἰσιδεῖν θέλω.

ΙΟ. Ἀλλ’ ἴξεται μέν· ἀξία δέ που μαθεῖν
κἀγὼ τά γ’ ἐν σοὶ δυσφόρως ἔχοντ’, ἄναξ.

ΟΙ. Κοὐ μὴ στερηθῇς γ’ ἐς τοσοῦτον ἐλπίδων
ἐμοῦ βεβῶτος· τῷ γὰρ ἂν καὶ μείζονι
λέξαιμ’ ἂν ἢ σοὶ διὰ τύχης τοιᾶσδ’ ἰών;
Ἐμοὶ πατὴρ μὲν Πόλυβος ἦν Κορίνθιος,
μήτηρ δὲ Μερόπη Δωρίς. Ἠγόμην δ’ ἀνὴρ
ἀστῶν μέγιστος τῶν ἐκεῖ, πρίν μοι τύχη
τοιάδ’ ἐπέστη, θαυμάσαι μὲν ἀξία,
σπουδῆς γε μέντοι τῆς ἐμῆς οὐκ ἀξία.
Ἀνὴρ γὰρ ἐν δείπνοις μ’ ὑπερπλησθεὶς μέθῃ
καλεῖ παρ’ οἴνῳ πλαστὸς ὡς εἴην πατρί.
Κἀγὼ βαρυνθεὶς τὴν μὲν οὖσαν ἡμέραν
μόλις κατέσχον, θἀτέρᾳ δ’ ἰὼν πέλας
μητρὸς πατρός τ’ ἤλεγχον· οἱ δὲ δυσφόρως
τοὔνειδος ἦγον τῷ μεθέντι τὸν λόγον.
Κἀγὼ τὰ μὲν κείνοιν ἐτερπόμην, ὅμως δ’
ἔκνιζέ μ’ αἰεὶ τοῦθ’· ὑφεῖρπε γὰρ πολύ.
Λάθρᾳ δὲ μητρὸς καὶ πατρὸς πορεύομαι
Πυθώδε, καί μ’ ὁ Φοῖβος ὧν μὲν ἱκόμην
ἄτιμον ἐξέπεμψεν, ἄλλα δ’ ἀθλίῳ
καὶ δεινὰ καὶ δύστηνα προὐφάνη λέγων,
ὡς μητρὶ μὲν χρείη με μιχθῆναι, γένος δ’
ἄτλητον ἀνθρώποισι δηλώσοιμ’ ὁρᾶν,
φονεὺς δ’ ἐσοίμην τοῦ φυτεύσαντος πατρός.
Κἀγὼ ‘πακούσας ταῦτα τὴν Κορινθίαν
ἄστροις τὸ λοιπὸν ἐκμετρούμενος χθόνα
ἔφευγον, ἔνθα μήποτ’ ὀψοίμην κακῶν
χρησμῶν ὀνείδη τῶν ἐμῶν τελούμενα.
Στείχων δ’ ἱκνοῦμαι τούσδε τοὺς χώρους ἐν οἷς
σὺ τὸν τύραννον τοῦτον ὄλλυσθαι λέγεις.
Καί σοι, γύναι, τἀληθὲς ἐξερῶ. Τριπλῆς

ὅτ’ ἦ κελεύθου τῆσδ’ ὁδοιπορῶν πέλας,
ἐνταῦθά μοι κῆρύξ τε κἀπὶ πωλικῆς
ἀνὴρ ἀπήνης ἐμβεβώς, οἷον σὺ φῄς,
ξυνηντίαζον· κἀξ ὁδοῦ μ’ ὅ θ’ ἡγεμὼν
805 αὐτός θ’ ὁ πρέσβυς πρὸς βίαν ἠλαυνέτην.
Κἀγὼ τὸν ἐκτρέποντα, τὸν τροχηλάτην,
παίω δι’ ὀργῆς· καί μ’ ὁ πρέσβυς ὡς ὁρᾷ
ὄχον παραστείχοντα, τηρήσας μέσον
κάρα διπλοῖς κέντροισί μου καθίκετο.
810 Οὐ μὴν ἴσην γ’ ἔτεισεν, ἀλλὰ συντόμως
σκήπτρῳ τυπεὶς ἐκ τῆσδε χειρὸς ὕπτιος
μέσης ἀπήνης εὐθὺς ἐκκυλίνδεται·
κτείνω δὲ τοὺς ξύμπαντας. Εἰ δὲ τῷ ξένῳ
τούτῳ προσήκει Λαΐῳ τι συγγενές,
815 τίς τοῦδέ γ’ ἀνδρὸς νῦν ἔτ’ ἀθλιώτερος;
τίς ἐχθροδαίμων μᾶλλον ἂν γένοιτ’ ἀνήρ;
ᾧ μὴ ξένων ἔξεστι μηδ’ ἀστῶν τινα
δόμοις δέχεσθαι, μηδὲ προσφωνεῖν τινα,
ὠθεῖν δ’ ἀπ’ οἴκων. Καὶ τάδ’ οὔτις ἄλλος ἦν
820 ἢ ‘γὼ ‘π’ ἐμαυτῷ τάσδ’ ἀρὰς ὁ προστιθείς.
Λέχη δὲ τοῦ θανόντος ἐν χεροῖν ἐμαῖν
χραίνω, δι’ ὧνπερ ὤλετ’. Ἆρ’ ἔφυν κακός;
ἆρ’ οὐχὶ πᾶς ἄναγνος; εἴ με χρὴ φυγεῖν,
καί μοι φυγόντι μἤστι τοὺς ἐμοὺς ἰδεῖν
825 μήτ’ ἐμβατεῦσαι πατρίδος, ἢ γάμοις με δεῖ
μητρὸς ζυγῆναι καὶ πατέρα κατακτανεῖν,
Πόλυβον, ὃς ἐξέθρεψε κἀξέφυσέ με.
Ἆρ’ οὐκ ἀπ’ ὠμοῦ ταῦτα δαίμονός τις ἂν
κρίνων ἐπ’ ἀνδρὶ τῷδ’ ἂν ὀρθοίη λόγον;
830 Μὴ δῆτα, μὴ δῆτ’, ὦ θεῶν ἁγνὸν σέβας,
ἴδοιμι ταύτην ἡμέραν, ἀλλ’ ἐκ βροτῶν
βαίην ἄφαντος πρόσθεν ἢ τοιάνδ’ ἰδεῖν
κηλῖδ’ ἐμαυτῷ συμφορᾶς ἀφιγμένην.

ΧΟ. Ἡμῖν μέν, ὦναξ, ταῦτ’ ὀκνήρ’· ἔως δ’ ἂν οὗν
835 πρὸς τοῦ παρόντος ἐκμάθῃς, ἔχ’ ἐλπίδα.

ΟΙ. Καὶ μὴν τοσοῦτόν γ’ ἐστί μοι τῆς ἐλπίδος,
τὸν ἄνδρα, τὸν βοτῆρα, προσμεῖναι μόνον.

ΙΟ. Πεφασμένου δὲ τίς ποθ’ ἡ προθυμία;

ΟΙ. Ἐγὼ διδάξω σ’· ἦν γὰρ εὑρεθῇ λέγων
840 σοὶ ταὔτ’, ἔγωγ’ ἂν ἐκπεφευγοίην πάθος.

ΙΟ. Ποῖον δέ μου περισσὸν ἤκουσας λόγον;

ΟΙ. Λῃστὰς ἔφασκες αὐτὸν ἄνδρας ἐννέπειν
ὥς νιν κατακτείνειαν. Εἰ μὲν οὖν ἔτι
λέξει τὸν αὐτὸν ἀριθμόν, οὐκ ἐγὼ ‘κτανον·
845 οὐ γὰρ γένοιτ’ ἂν εἷς γε τοῖς πολλοῖς ἴσος·
εἰ δ’ ἄνδρ’ ἔν’ οἰόζωνον αὐδήσει, σαφῶς
τοῦτ’ ἐστὶν ἤδη τοὔργον εἰς ἐμὲ ῥέπον.

ΙΟ. Ἀλλ’ ὡς φανέν γε τοὔπος ὦδ’ ἐπίστασο,
κοὐκ ἔστιν αὐτῷ τοῦτό γ’ ἐκβαλεῖν πάλιν·
850 πόλις γὰρ ἤκουσ’, οὐκ ἐγὼ μόνη, τάδε.
Εἰ δ’ οὖν τι κἀκτρέποιτο τοῦ πρόσθεν λόγου,
οὔτοι ποτ’, ὦναξ, τόν γε Λαΐου φόνον
φανεῖ δικαίως ὀρθόν, ὅν γε Λοξίας
διεῖπε χρῆναι παιδὸς ἐξ ἐμοῦ θανεῖν.

Καίτοι νιν οὐ κεῖνός γ’ ὁ δύστηνός ποτε
κατέκταν’, ἀλλ’ αὐτὸς πάροιθεν ὤλετο.
Ὥστ’ οὐχὶ μαντείας γ’ ἂν οὔτε τῇδ’ ἐγὼ
βλέψαιμ’ ἂν οὕνεκ’ οὔτε τῇδ’ ἂν ὕστερον.

ΟΙ. Καλῶς νομίζεις. Ἀλλ’ ὅμως τὸν ἐργάτην
πέμψον τινὰ στελοῦντα, μηδὲ τοῦτ’ ἀφῇς.

ΙΟ. Πέμψω ταχύνασ’· ἀλλ’ ἴωμεν ἐς δόμους·
οὐδὲν γὰρ ἂν πράξαιμ’ ἂν ὧν οὔ σοι φίλον.

ΧΟ. Εἴ μοι ξυνείη φέροντι μοῖρα τὰν Str. 1 .
εὔσεπτον ἁγνείαν λόγων
ἔργων τε πάντων, ὧν νόμοι πρόκεινται
ὑψίποδες, οὐρανίαν
δι’ αἰθέρα τεκνωθέντες, ὧν Ὄλυμπος
πατὴρ μόνος, οὐδέ νιν
θνατὰ φύσις ἀνέρων
ἔτικτεν, οὐδὲ μήποτε λά-
θα κατακοιμάσῃ·
μέγας ἐν τούτοις θεός, οὐδὲ γηράσκει.
Ὕβρις φυτεύει τύραννον· ὕβρις, εἰ Ant. 1 .
πολλῶν ὑπερπλησθῇ μάταν
ἃ μὴ ‘πίκαιρα μηδὲ συμφέροντα,
ἀκρότατα γεῖσ’ ἀναβᾶσ’
‹ἄφαρ› ἀπότομον ὤρουσεν εἰς ἀνάγκαν,
ἔνθ’ οὐ ποδὶ χρησίμῳ
χρῆται. Τὸ καλῶς δ’ ἔχον
πόλει πάλαισμα μήποτε λῦ-
σαι θεὸν αἰτοῦμαι·
θεὸν οὐ λήξω ποτὲ προστάταν ἴσχων.
Εἰ δέ τις ὑπέροπτα χερ- Str. 2 .

σὶν ἢ λόγῳ πορεύεται,
Δίκας ἀφόβητος οὐδὲ
δαιμόνων ἕδη σέβων,
κακά νιν ἕλοιτο μοῖρα,
δυσπότμου χάριν χλιδᾶς,
εἰ μὴ τὸ κέρδος κερδανεῖ δικαίως
καὶ τῶν ἀσέπτων ἕρξεται,
ἢ τῶν ἀθίκτων ἕξεται ματᾴζων.
Τίς ἔτι ποτ᾽ ἐν τοῖσδ᾽ ἀνὴρ θυμοῦ βέλη
εὔξεται ψυχᾶς ἀμύνειν;
Εἰ γὰρ αἱ τοιαίδε πράξεις τίμιαι,
τί δεῖ με χορεύειν;
Οὐκέτι τὸν ἄθικτον εἶ-Ant. 2 .
μι γᾶς ἐπ᾽ ὀμφαλὸν σέβων,
οὐδ᾽ ἐς τὸν Ἀβαῖσι ναόν,
οὐδὲ τὰν Ὀλυμπίαν,
εἰ μὴ τάδε χειρόδεικτα
πᾶσιν ἁρμόσει βροτοῖς.
Ἀλλ᾽, ὦ κρατύνων, εἴπερ ὄρθ᾽ ἀκούεις,
Ζεῦ, πάντ᾽ ἀνάσσων, μὴ λάθοι
σὲ τάν τε σὰν ἀθάνατον αἰὲν ἀρχάν.
Φθίνοντα γὰρ ‹τοῦ παλαιοῦ› Λαΐου
θέσφατ᾽ ἐξαιροῦσιν ἤδη,
κοὐδαμοῦ τιμαῖς Ἀπόλλων ἐμφανής·
ἔρρει δὲ τὰ θεῖα.

ΙΟ. Χώρας ἄνακτες, δόξα μοι παρεστάθη
ναοὺς ἱκέσθαι δαιμόνων, τάδ᾽ ἐν χεροῖν
στέφη λαβούσῃ κἀπιθυμιάματα.
Ὑψοῦ γὰρ αἴρει θυμὸν Οἰδίπους ἄγαν
λύπαισι παντοίαισιν; οὐδ᾽ ὁποῖ᾽ ἀνὴρ
ἔννους τὰ καινὰ τοῖς πάλαι τεκμαίρεται,
ἀλλ᾽ ἔστι τοῦ λέγοντος, ἢν φόβους λέγῃ.
Ὅτ᾽ οὖν παραινοῦσ᾽ οὐδὲν ἐς πλέον ποῶ,
πρὸς σ᾽, ὦ Λύκει᾽ Ἄπολλον, ἄγχιστος γὰρ εἶ,
ἱκέτις ἀφῖγμαι τοῖσδε σὺν κατεύγμασιν,

ὅπως λύσιν τιν’ ἡμὶν εὐαγῆ πόρῃς·
ὡς νῦν ὀκνοῦμεν πάντες ἐκπεπληγμένον
κεῖνον βλέποντες ὡς κυβερνήτην νεώς.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
Ἆρ’ ἂν παρ’ ὑμῶν, ὦ ξένοι, μάθοιμ’ ὅπου
925 τὰ τοῦ τυράννου δώματ’ ἐστὶν Οἰδίπου;
μάλιστα δ’ αὐτὸν εἴπατ’, εἰ κάτισθ’, ὅπου.

ΧΟ. Στέγαι μὲν αἵδε, καὐτὸς ἔνδον, ὦ ξένε·
γυνὴ δὲ μήτηρ ἥδε τῶν κείνου τέκνων.

ΑΓ. Ἀλλ’ ὀλβία τε καὶ ξὺν ὀλβίοις ἀεὶ
930 γένοιτ’, ἐκείνου γ’ οὖσα παντελὴς δάμαρ.

ΙΟ. Αὔτως δὲ καὶ σύ γ’, ὦ ξέν’· ἄξιος γὰρ εἶ
τῆς εὐεπείας οὕνεκ’. Ἀλλὰ φράζ’ ὅτου
χρῄζων ἀφῖξαι χὤ τι σημῆναι θέλων.

ΑΓ. Ἀγαθὰ δόμοις τε καὶ πόσει τῷ σῷ, γύναι.
935 ΙΟ. Τὰ ποῖα ταῦτα; παρὰ τίνος δ’ ἀφιγμένος;

ΑΓ. Ἐκ τῆς Κορίνθου. Τὸ δ’ ἔπος οὐξερῶ τάχα,
ἥδοιο μέν - πῶς δ’ οὐκ ἄν; - ἀσχάλλοις δ’ ἴσως.

ΙΟ. Τί δ’ ἔστι; ποίαν δύναμιν ὦδ’ ἔχει διπλῆν;

ΑΓ. Τύραννον αὐτὸν οὐπιχώριοι χθονὸς
τῆς Ἰσθμίας στήσουσιν, ὡς ηὐδᾶτ’ ἐκεῖ.

ΙΟ. Τί δ’; οὐχ ὁ πρέσβυς Πόλυβος ἐγκρατὴς ἔτι;

ΑΓ. Οὐ δῆτ’, ἐπεί νιν θάνατος ἐν τάφοις ἔχει.

ΙΟ. Πῶς εἶπας; ἦ τέθνηκε Πόλυβος;

ΑΓ. Εἰ δὲ μὴ
λέγω γ’ ἐγὼ τἀληθές, ἀξιῶ θανεῖν.
Ὦ πρόσπολ’, οὐχὶ δεσπότῃ τάδ’ ὡς τάχος
μολοῦσα λέξεις; Ὦ θεῶν μαντεύματα,
ἵν’ ἐστέ; Τοῦτον Οἰδίπους πάλαι τρέμων
τὸν ἄνδρ’ ἔφευγε μὴ κτάνοι, καὶ νῦν ὅδε
πρὸς τῆς τύχης ὅλωλεν οὐδὲ τοῦδ’ ὕπο.
ΟΙ. Ὦ φίλτατον γυναικὸς Ἰοκάστης κάρα,
τί μ’ ἐξεπέμψω δεῦρο τῶνδε δωμάτων;

ΙΟ. Ἄκουε τἀνδρὸς τοῦδε, καὶ σκόπει κλύων

τὰ σέμν’ ἴν’ ἥκει τοῦ θεοῦ μαντεύματα.

ΟΙ. Οὗτος δὲ τίς ποτ’ ἐστί, καὶ τί μοι λέγει;
ΙΟ. Ἐκ τῆς Κορίνθου, πατέρα τὸν σὸν ἀγγελῶν
ὡς οὐκέτ’ ὄντα Πόλυβον, ἀλλ’ ὀλωλότα.

ΟΙ. Τί φῄς, ξέν’; αὐτός μοι σὺ σημήνας γενοῦ.

ΑΓ. Εἰ τοῦτο πρῶτον δεῖ μ’ ἀπαγγεῖλαι σαφῶς,
εὖ ἴσθ’ ἐκεῖνον θανάσιμον βεβηκότα.
ΟΙ. Πότερα δόλοισιν; ἢ νόσου ξυναλλαγῇ;

ΑΓ. Σμικρὰ παλαιὰ σώματ’ εὐνάζει ῥοπή.

ΟΙ. Νόσοις ὁ τλήμων, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἔφθιτο.

ΑΓ. Καὶ τῷ μακρῷ γε συμμετρούμενος χρόνῳ.

ΟΙ. Φεῦ φεῦ, τί δῆτ’ ἄν, ὦ γύναι, σκοποῖτό τις
τὴν Πυθόμαντιν ἑστίαν, ἢ τοὺς ἄνω
κλάζοντας ὄρνις, ὧν ὑφηγητῶν ἐγὼ
κτενεῖν ἔμελλον πατέρα τὸν ἐμόν; ὁ δὲ θανὼν
κεύθει κάτω δὴ γῆς, ἐγὼ δ’ ὅδ’ ἐνθάδε

ἄψαυστος ἔγχους - εἴ τι μὴ τὠμῷ πόθῳ
970 κατέφθιθ’· οὕτω δ’ ἂν θανὼν εἴη ‘ξ ἐμοῦ.
Τὰ δ’ οὖν παρόντα συλλαβὼν θεσπίσματα
κεῖται παρ’ Ἅιδῃ Πόλυβος ἄξι’ οὐδενός.

ΙΟ. Οὔκουν ἐγώ σοι ταῦτα προὔλεγον πάλαι;

ΟΙ. Ηὔδας· ἐγὼ δὲ τῷ φόβῳ παρηγόμην.
975 ΙΟ. Μὴ νῦν ἔτ’ αὐτῶν μηδὲν ἐς θυμὸν βάλῃς.

ΟΙ. Καὶ πῶς τὸ μητρὸς λέκτρον οὐκ ὀκνεῖν με δεῖ;

ΙΟ. Τί δ’ ἂν φοβοῖτ’ ἄνθρωπος, ᾧ τὰ τῆς τύχης
κρατεῖ, πρόνοια δ’ ἐστὶν οὐδενὸς σαφής;
εἰκῇ κράτιστον ζῆν, ὅπως δύναιτό τις.
980 Σὺ δ’ εἰς τὰ μητρὸς μὴ φοβοῦ νυμφεύματα·
πολλοὶ γὰρ ἤδη κἀν ὀνείρασιν βροτῶν
μητρὶ ξυνηυνάσθησαν· ἀλλὰ ταῦθ’ ὅτῳ
παρ’ οὐδέν ἐστι, ῥᾷστα τὸν βίον φέρει.

ΟΙ. Καλῶς ἅπαντα ταῦτ’ ἂν ἐξείρητό σοι,
985 εἰ μὴ ‘κύρει ζῶσ’ ἡ τεκοῦσα· νῦν δ’ ἐπεὶ
ζῇ, πᾶσ’ ἀνάγκη, κεἰ καλῶς λέγεις, ὀκνεῖν.

ΙΟ. Καὶ μὴν μέγας ‹γ’› ὀφθαλμὸς οἰ πατρὸς τάφοι.

ΟΙ. Μέγας, ξυνίημ’· ἀλλὰ τῆς ζώσης φόβος.

ΑΓ. Ποίας δὲ καὶ γυναικὸς ἐκφοβεῖσθ’ ὕπερ;
ΟΙ. Μερόπης, γεραιέ, Πόλυβος ἧς ᾧκει μέτα.

ΑΓ. Τί δ’ ἔστ’ ἐκείνης ὑμὶν ἐς φόβον φέρον;

ΟΙ. Θεήλατον μάντευμα δεινόν, ὦ ξένε.

ΑΓ. Ἦ ῥητόν; ἢ οὐ‹χὶ› θεμιτὸν ἄλλον εἰδέναι;

ΟΙ. Μάλιστά γ’· εἶπε γάρ με Λοξίας ποτὲ
χρῆναι μιγῆναι μητρὶ τἠμαυτοῦ, τό τε
πατρῷον αἷμα χερσὶ ταῖς ἐμαῖς ἐλεῖν.
Ὥν οὕνεχ’ ἡ Κόρινθος ἐξ ἐμοῦ πάλαι
μακρὰν ἀπῳκεῖτ’· εὐτυχῶς μέν, ἀλλ’ ὅμως
τὰ τῶν τεκόντων ὄμματ’ ἥδιστον βλέπειν.
ΑΓ. Ἦ γὰρ τάδ’ ὀκνῶν κεῖθεν ἦσθ’ ἀπόπτολις;

ΟΙ. Πατρός γε χρῄζων μὴ φονεὺς εἶναι, γέρον.

ΑΓ. Τί δῆτ’ ἐγὼ οὐχὶ τοῦδε τοῦ φόβου σ’, ἄναξ,
ἐπείπερ εὔνους ἦλθον, ἐξελυσάμην;

ΟΙ. Καὶ μὴν χάριν γ’ ἂν ἀξίαν λάβοις ἐμοῦ.
1005 ΑΓ. Καὶ μὴν μάλιστα τοῦτ’ ἀφικόμην, ὅπως
σοῦ πρὸς δόμους ἐλθόντος εὖ πράξαιμί τι.

ΟΙ. Ἀλλ’ οὔποτ’ εἶμι τοῖς φυτεύσασιν γ’ ὁμοῦ.

ΑΓ. Ὦ παῖ, καλῶς εἶ δῆλος οὐκ εἰδὼς τί δρᾷς.

ΟΙ. Πῶς, ὦ γεραιέ; πρὸς θεῶν, δίδασκέ με.
1010 ΑΓ. Εἰ τῶνδε φεύγεις οὕνεκ’ εἰς οἴκους μολεῖν -

ΟΙ. Ταρβῶν γε μή μοι Φοῖβος ἐξέλθῃ σαφής.

ΑΓ. Ἢ μὴ μίασμα τῶν φυτευσάντων λάβῃς;

ΟΙ. Τοῦτ’ αὐτό, πρέσβυ· τοῦτό μ’ εἰσαεὶ φοβεῖ.

ΑΓ. Ἆρ’ οἶσθα δῆτα πρὸς δίκης οὐδὲν τρέμων;
1015 ΟΙ. Πῶς δ’ οὐχί, παῖς γ’ εἰ τῶνδε γεννητῶν ἔφυν;

ΑΓ. Ὀθούνεκ’ ἦν σοι Πόλυβος οὐδὲν ἐν γένει.

ΟΙ. Πῶς εἶπας; οὐ γὰρ Πόλυβος ἐξέφυσέ με;

ΑΓ. Οὐ μᾶλλον οὐδὲν τοῦδε τἀνδρός, ἀλλ’ ἴσον.

ΟΙ. Καὶ πῶς ὁ φύσας ἐξ ἴσου τῷ μηδενί;
1020 ΑΓ. Ἀλλ’ οὔ σ’ ἐγείνατ’ οὔτ’ ἐκεῖνος οὔτ’ ἐγώ.

ΟΙ. Ἀλλ’ ἀντὶ τοῦ δὴ παῖδά μ’ ὠνομάζετο;

ΑΓ. Δῶρόν ποτ’, ἴσθι, τῶν ἐμῶν χειρῶν λαβών.

ΟΙ. Κᾆθ’ ὧδ’ ἀπ’ ἄλλης χειρὸς ἔστερξεν μέγα;

ΑΓ. Ἡ γὰρ πρὶν αὐτὸν ἐξέπεισ’ ἀπαιδία.

1025 ΟΙ. Σὺ δ’ ἐμπολήσας, ἢ τυχών μ’ αὐτῷ δίδως;

ΑΓ. Εὑρὼν ναπαίαις ἐν Κιθαιρῶνος πτυχαῖς.

ΟΙ. Ὡδοιπόρεις δὲ πρὸς τί τούσδε τοὺς τόπους;

ΑΓ. Ἐνταῦθ’ ὀρείοις ποιμνίοις ἐπεστάτουν.

ΟΙ. Ποιμὴν γὰρ ἦσθα κἀπὶ θητείᾳ πλάνης;
1030 ΑΓ. Σοῦ δ’, ὦ τέκνον, σωτήρ γε τῷ τότ’ ἐν χρόνῳ.

ΟΙ. Τί δ’ ἄλγος ἴσχοντ’ ἐν κακοῖς με λαμβάνεις;

ΑΓ. Ποδῶν ἂν ἄρθρα μαρτυρήσειεν τὰ σά.

ΟΙ. Οἴμοι, τί τοῦτ’ ἀρχαῖον ἐννέπεις κακόν;

ΑΓ. Λύω σ’ ἔχοντα διατόρους ποδοῖν ἀκμάς.
1035 ΟΙ. Δεινόν γ’ ὄνειδος σπαργάνων ἀνειλόμην.

ΑΓ. Ὥστ’ ὠνομάσθης ἐκ τύχης ταύτης ὃς εἶ.

ΟΙ. Ὦ πρὸς θεῶν, πρὸς μητρὸς ἢ πατρός; φράσον.

ΑΓ. Οὐκ οἶδ’· ὁ δοὺς δὲ ταῦτ’ ἐμοῦ λῷον φρονεῖ.

ΟΙ. Ἦ γὰρ παρ’ ἄλλου μ’ ἔλαβες οὐδ’ αὐτὸς τυχών;
1040 ΑΓ. Οὔκ, ἀλλὰ ποιμὴν ἄλλος ἐκδίδωσί μοι.

ΟΙ. Τίς οὗτος; ἦ κάτοισθα δηλῶσαι λόγῳ;

ΑΓ. Τῶν Λαΐου δήπου τις ὠνομάζετο.

ΟΙ. Ἦ τοῦ τυράννου τῆσδε γῆς πάλαι ποτέ;

ΑΓ. Μάλιστα· τούτου τἀνδρὸς οὗτος ἦν βοτήρ.
1045 ΟΙ. Ἦ κἄστ’ ἔτι ζῶν οὗτος, ὥστ’ ἰδεῖν ἐμέ;

ΑΓ. Ὑμεῖς γ’ ἄριστ’ εἰδεῖτ’ ἂν οὐπιχώριοι.

ΟΙ. Ἔστιν τις ὑμῶν τῶν παρεστώτων πέλας,
ὅστις κάτοιδε τὸν βοτῆρ’ ὃν ἐννέπει,
εἴτ’ οὖν ἐπ’ ἀγρῶν εἴτε κἀνθάδ’ εἰσιδών;
1050 σημήναθ’, ὡς ὁ καιρὸς ηὑρῆσθαι τάδε.

ΧΟ. Οἶμαι μὲν οὐδέν’ ἄλλον ἢ τὸν ἐξ ἀγρῶν
ὃν κἀμάτευες πρόσθεν εἰσιδεῖν· ἀτὰρ
ἥδ’ ἂν τάδ’ οὐχ ἥκιστ’ ἂν Ἰοκάστη λέγοι.

ΟΙ. Γύναι, νοεῖς ἐκεῖνον ὅντιν’ ἀρτίως
1055 μολεῖν ἐφιέμεσθα τόν θ’ οὗτος λέγει -

ΙΟ. Τί δ’ ὅντιν’ εἶπε; μηδὲν ἐντραπῇς· τὰ δὲ
ῥηθέντα βούλου μηδὲ μεμνῆσθαι μάτην.

ΟΙ. Οὐκ ἂν γένοιτο τοῦθ’, ὅπως ἐγὼ λαβὼν
σημεῖα τοιαῦτ’ οὐ φανῶ τοὐμὸν γένος.
1060 ΙΟ. Μή, πρὸς θεῶν, εἴπερ τι τοῦ σαυτοῦ βίου
κήδῃ, ματεύσῃς τοῦθ’· ἅλις νοσοῦσ’ ἐγώ.

ΟΙ. Θάρσει· σὺ μὲν γὰρ οὐδ’ ἐὰν τρίτης ἐγὼ
μητρὸς φανῶ τρίδουλος, ἐκφανῇ κακή.

ΙΟ. Ὅμως πιθοῦ μοι, λίσσομαι· μὴ δρᾶ τάδε.
ΟΙ. Οὐκ ἂν πιθοίμην μὴ οὐ τάδ’ ἐκμαθεῖν σαφῶς.

ΙΟ. Καὶ μὴν φρονοῦσά γ’ εὖ τὰ λῷστά σοι λέγω.

ΟΙ. Τὰ λῷστα τοίνυν ταῦτά μ’ ἀλγύνει πάλαι.

ΙΟ. Ὦ δύσποτμ’, εἴθε μήποτε γνοίης ὃς εἶ.

ΟΙ. Ἄξει τις ἐλθὼν δεῦρο τὸν βοτῆρά μοι;

ΙΟ. Ἰοὺ ἰού, δύστηνε· τοῦτο γάρ σ’ ἔχω
μόνον προσειπεῖν, ἄλλο δ’ οὔποθ’ ὕστερον.

ΧΟ. Τί ποτε βέβηκεν, Οἰδίπους, ὑπ’ ἀγρίας
ᾄξασα λύπης ἡ γυνή; δέδοιχ’ ὅπως
μὴ ‘κ τῆς σιωπῆς τῆσδ’ ἀναρρήξει κακά.

ΟΙ. Ὁποῖα χρῄζει ῥηγνύτω· τοὐμὸν δ’ ἐγώ,
κεἰ σμικρόν ἐστι, σπέρμ’ ἰδεῖν βουλήσομαι.
Αὕτη δ’ ἴσως, φρονεῖ γὰρ ὡς γυνὴ μέγα,

τὴν δυσγένειαν τὴν ἐμὴν αἰσχύνεται.
Ἐγὼ δ’ ἐμαυτὸν παῖδα τῆς Τύχης νέμων
τῆς εὖ διδούσης, οὐκ ἀτιμασθήσομαι.
Τῆς γὰρ πέφυκα μητρός· οἱ δὲ συγγενεῖς
μῆνές με μικρὸν καὶ μέγαν διώρισαν.
Τοιόσδε δ’ ἐκφὺς οὐκ ἂν ἐξέλθοιμ’ ἔτι
ποτ’ ἄλλος, ὥστε μὴ ‘κμαθεῖν τοὐμὸν γένος.

ΧΟ. Εἴπερ ἐγὼ μάντις εἰμὶ Str.
καὶ κατὰ γνώμαν ἴδρις,
οὐ τὸν Ὄλυμπον ἀπείρων, ὦ Κιθαιρών,
οὐκ ἔσῃ τὰν αὔριον
πανσέληνον, μὴ οὐ σέ γε καὶ πατριώταν Οἰδίπου
καὶ τροφὸν καὶ ματέρ’ αὔξειν,
καὶ χορεύεσθαι πρὸς ἡμῶν, ὡς ἐπίηρα φέροντα
τοῖς ἐμοῖς τυράννοις.
Ἰήϊε Φοῖβε, σοὶ δὲ ταῦτ’ ἀρέστ’ εἴη.
Τίς σε, τέκνον, τίς σ’ ἔτικτε Ant.
τῶν μακραιώνων ἄρα
Πανὸς ὀρεσσιβάτα πατρὸς πελασθεῖσ’,
ἢ σέ γ’ εὐνάτειρά τις
Λοξίου; τῷ γὰρ πλάκες ἀγρόνομοι πᾶσαι φίλαι·
εἴθ’ ὁ Κυλλάνας ἀνάσσων,
εἴθ’ ὁ Βακχεῖος θεὸς ναίων ἐπ’ ἄκρων ὀρέων εὖ-
ρημα δέξατ’ ἔκ του
Νυμφᾶν Ἑλικωνίδων, αἷς πλεῖστα συμπαίζει.
ΟΙ. Εἰ χρή τι κἀμὲ μὴ συναλλάξαντά πω,
πρέσβεις, σταθμᾶσθαι, τὸν βοτῆρ’ ὁρᾶν δοκῶ,
ὅνπερ πάλαι ζητοῦμεν· ἔν τε γὰρ μακρῷ
γήρᾳ ξυνᾴδει τῷδε τἀνδρὶ σύμμετρος,
ἄλλως τε τοὺς ἄγοντας ὥσπερ οἰκέτας
ἔγνωκ’ ἐμαυτοῦ· τῇ δ’ ἐπιστήμῃ σύ μου
προὔχοις τάχ’ ἄν που, τὸν βοτῆρ’ ἰδὼν πάρος.

ΧΟ. Ἔγνωκα γάρ, σάφ’ ἴσθι· Λαΐου γὰρ ἦν,
εἴπερ τις ἄλλος, πιστὸς ὡς νομεὺς ἀνήρ.

ΟΙ. Σὲ πρῶτ’ ἐρωτῶ, τὸν Κορίνθιον ξένον·
1120 ἦ τόνδε φράζεις;

ΑΓ. Τοῦτον, ὅνπερ εἰσορᾷς.

ΟΙ. Οὗτος σύ, πρέσβυ, δεῦρό μοι φώνει βλέπων
ὅσ’ ἄν σ’ ἐρωτῶ. Λαΐου ποτ’ ἦσθα σύ;

ΘΕΡΑΠΩΝ
Ἦ δοῦλος, οὐκ ὠνητός, ἀλλ’ οἴκοι τραφείς.

ΟΙ. Ἔργον μεριμνῶν ποῖον ἢ βίον τίνα;
1125 ΘΕ. Ποίμναις τὰ πλεῖστα τοῦ βίου συνειπόμην.

ΟΙ. Χώροις μάλιστα πρὸς τίσιν ξύναυλος ὤν;

ΘΕ. Ἦν μὲν Κιθαιρών, ἦν δὲ πρόσχωρος τόπος.

ΟΙ. Τὸν ἄνδρα τόνδ’ οὖν οἶσθα τῇδέ που μαθών;

ΘΕ. Τί χρῆμα δρῶντα; ποῖον ἄνδρα καὶ λέγεις;
1130 ΟΙ. Τόνδ’ ὃς πάρεστιν· ἢ ξυναλλάξας τί πως;

ΘΕ. Οὐχ ὥστε γ’ εἰπεῖν ἐν τάχει μνήμης ὕπο.

ΑΓ. Κοὐδέν γε θαῦμα, δέσποτ’· ἀλλ’ ἐγὼ σαφῶς
ἀγνῶτ’ ἀναμνήσω νιν. Εὖ γὰρ οἶδ’ ὅτι
κάτοιδεν, ἦμος τὸν Κιθαιρῶνος τόπον
1135 ὁ μὲν διπλοῖσι ποιμνίοις, ἐγὼ δ’ ἑνὶ
ἐπλησίαζον τῷδε τἀνδρὶ τρεῖς ὅλους
ἑξ ἦρος εἰς ἀρκτοῦρον ἐκμήνους χρόνους·
χειμῶνα δ’ ἤδη τἀμά τ’ εἰς ἔπαυλ’ ἐγὼ
ἤλαυνον οὗτός τ’ εἰς τὰ Λαΐου σταθμά.
1140 Λέγω τι τούτων, ἢ οὐ λέγω πεπραγμένον;

ΘΕ. Λέγεις ἀληθῆ, καίπερ ἐκ μακροῦ χρόνου.

ΑΓ. Φέρ’ εἰπὲ νῦν, τότ’ οἶσθα παῖδά μοί τινα
δούς, ὡς ἐμαυτῷ θρέμμα θρεψαίμην ἐγώ;

ΘΕ. Τί δ’ ἔστι; πρὸς τί τοῦτο τοὔπος ἱστορεῖς;
1145 ΑΓ. Ὅδ’ ἐστίν, ὦ τᾶν, κεῖνος ὃς τότ’ ἦν νέος.

ΘΕ. Οὐκ εἰς ὄλεθρον; οὐ σιωπήσας ἔσῃ;

ΟΙ. Ἄ, μὴ κόλαζε, πρέσβυ, τόνδ’, ἐπεὶ τὰ σὰ
δεῖται κολαστοῦ μᾶλλον ἢ τὰ τοῦδ’ ἔπη.

ΘΕ. Τί δ’, ὦ φέριστε δεσποτῶν, ἁμαρτάνω;
1150 ΟΙ. Οὐκ ἐννέπων τὸν παῖδ’ ὃν οὗτος ἱστορεῖ.

ΘΕ. Λέγει γὰρ εἰδὼς οὐδέν, ἀλλ’ ἄλλως πονεῖ.

ΟΙ. Σὺ πρὸς χάριν μὲν οὐκ ἐρεῖς, κλαίων δ’ ἐρεῖς.

ΘΕ. Μὴ δῆτα, πρὸς θεῶν, τὸν γέροντά μ’ αἰκίσῃ.

ΟΙ. Οὐχ ὡς τάχος τις τοῦδ’ ἀποστρέψει χέρας;
1155 ΘΕ. Δύστηνος, ἀντὶ τοῦ; τί προσχρῄζων μαθεῖν;

ΟΙ. Τὸν παῖδ’ ἔδωκας τῷδ’ ὃν οὗτος ἱστορεῖ;

ΘΕ. Ἔδωκ’· ὀλέσθαι δ’ ὤφελον τῇδ’ ἡμέρᾳ.

ΟΙ. Ἀλλ’ εἰς τόδ’ ἥξεις μὴ λέγων γε τοὔνδικον.

ΘΕ. Πολλῷ γε μᾶλλον, ἢν φράσω, διόλλυμαι.
1160 ΟΙ. Ἀνὴρ ὅδ’, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἐς τριβὰς ἐλᾷ.

ΘΕ. Οὐ δῆτ’ ἔγωγ’, ἀλλ’ εἶπον ὡς δοίην πάλαι.

ΟΙ. Πόθεν λαβών; οἰκεῖον ἢ ‘ξ ἄλλου τινός;

ΘΕ. Ἐμὸν μὲν οὐκ ἔγωγ’, ἐδεξάμην δέ του.

ΟΙ. Τίνος πολιτῶν τῶνδε κἀκ ποίας στέγης;
1165 ΘΕ. Μὴ πρὸς θεῶν, μή, δέσποθ’, ἱστόρει πλέον.

ΟΙ. Ὄλωλας, εἴ σε ταῦτ’ ἐρήσομαι πάλιν.

ΘΕ. Τῶν Λαΐου τοίνυν τις ἦν γεννημάτων.

ΟΙ. Ἦ δοῦλος, ἢ κείνου τις ἐγγενὴς γεγώς;

ΘΕ. Οἴμοι, πρὸς αὐτῷ γ’ εἰμὶ τῷ δεινῷ λέγειν.
1170 ΟΙ. Κἄγωγ’ ἀκούειν· ἀλλ’ ὅμως ἀκουστέον.

ΘΕ. Κείνου γέ τοι δὴ παῖς ἐκλῄζεθ’· ἡ δ’ ἔσω
κάλλιστ’ ἂν εἴποι σὴ γυνὴ τάδ’ ὡς ἔχει.

ΟΙ. Ἦ γὰρ δίδωσιν ἥδε σοι;

ΘΕ. Μάλιστ’, ἄναξ.

ΟΙ. Ὡς πρὸς τί χρείας;

ΘΕ. Ὡς ἀναλώσαιμί νιν.
1175 ΟΙ. Τεκοῦσα τλήμων;

ΘΕ. Θεσφάτων γ’ ὄκνῳ κακῶν.

ΟΙ. Ποίων;

ΘΕ. Κτενεῖν νιν τοὺς τεκόντας ἦν λόγος.

ΟΙ. Πῶς δῆτ’ ἀφῆκας τῷ γέροντι τῷδε σύ;

ΘΕ. Κατοικτίσας, ὦ δέσποθ’, ὡς ἄλλην χθόνα
δοκῶν ἀποίσειν, αὐτὸς ἔνθεν ἦν· ὁ δὲ
1180 κάκ’ εἰς μέγιστ’ ἔσωσεν· εἰ γὰρ οὗτος εἶ
ὅν φησιν οὗτος, ἴσθι δύσποτμος γεγώς.

ΟΙ. Ἰοὺ ἰού· τὰ πάντ’ ἂν ἐξήκοι σαφῆ.
Ὦ φῶς, τελευταῖόν σε προσβλέψαιμι νῦν,
ὅστις πέφασμαι φύς τ’ ἀφ’ ὧν οὐ χρῆν, ξὺν οἷς τ’
1185 οὐ χρῆν ὁμιλῶν, οὕς τέ μ’ οὐκ ἔδει κτανών.

ΧΟ. Ἰὼ γενεαὶ βροτῶν, Str. 1 .
ὡς ὑμᾶς ἴσα καὶ τὸ μη-
δὲν ζώσας ἐναριθμῶ.
Τίς γάρ, τίς ἀνὴρ πλέον
1190 τᾶς εὐδαιμονίας φέρει
ἢ τοσοῦτον ὅσον δοκεῖν
καὶ δόξαντ’ ἀποκλῖναι;
Τὸν σόν τοι παράδειγμ’ ἔχων,
τὸν σὸν δαίμονα, τὸν σόν, ὦ
τλᾶμον Οἰδιπόδα, βροτῶν

οὐδὲν μακαρίζω·
ὅστις καθ’ ὑπερβολὰν Ant. 1 .
τοξεύσας ἐκράτησε τοῦ
πάντ’ εὐδαίμονος ὄλβου,
ὦ Ζεῦ, κατὰ μὲν φθίσας
τὰν γαμψώνυχα παρθένον
χρησμῳδόν, θανάτων δ’ ἐμᾷ
χώρᾳ πύργος ἀνέστα·
ἐξ οὗ καὶ βασιλεὺς καλῇ
ἐμὸς καὶ τὰ μέγιστ’ ἐτι-
μάθης ταῖς μεγάλαισιν ἐν
Θήβαισ‹ιν› ἀνάσσων.
Τανῦν δ’ ἀκούειν τίς ἀθλιώτερος; Str. 2 .
τίς ἄταις ἀγρίαις, τίς ἐν πόνοις
ξύνοικος ἀλλαγᾷ βίου;
Ἰὼ κλεινὸν Οἰδίπου κάρα,
ᾧ μέγας λιμὴν αὐτὸς ἤρκεσεν
παιδὶ καὶ πατρὶ θαλαμηπόλῳ πεσεῖν,
πῶς ποτε πῶς ποθ’ αἱ πατρῷ-
αί σ’ ἄλοκες φέρειν, τάλας,
σῖγ’ ἐδυνάθησαν ἐς τοσόνδε;
Ἐφηῦρέ σ’ ἄκονθ’ ὁ πάνθ’ ὁρῶν χρόνος· Ant. 2 .
δικάζει τὸν ἄγαμον γάμον πάλαι
τεκνοῦντα καὶ τεκνούμενον.
Ἰώ, Λαΐειον ‹ὦ› τέκνον·
εἴθε σ’ εἴθ’ ἐ‹γὼ› μήποτ’ εἰδόμαν·
δύρομαι γὰρ ὡς περίαλλ’ ἰα‹κ›χέων
ἐκ στομάτων. Τὸ δ’ ὀρθὸν εἰ-
πεῖν, ἀνέπνευσά τ’ ἐκ σέθεν
καὶ κατεκοίμησα τοὐμὸν ὄμμα.

ΕΞΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
Ὦ γῆς μέγιστα τῆσδ’ ἀεὶ τιμώμενοι,
οἷ’ ἔργ’ ἀκούσεσθ’, οἷα δ’ εἰσόψεσθ’, ὅσον δ’
ἀρεῖσθε πένθος, εἴπερ ἐγγενῶς ἔτι
τῶν Λαβδακείων ἐντρέπεσθε δωμάτων.

Οἶμαι γὰρ οὔτ’ ἂν Ἴστρον οὔτε Φᾶσιν ἂν
νίψαι καθαρμῷ τήνδε τὴν στέγην, ὅσα
κεύθει, τὰ δ’ αὐτίκ’ εἰς τὸ φῶς φανεῖ κακὰ
1230 ἑκόντα κοὐκ ἄκοντα· τῶν δὲ πημονῶν
μάλιστα λυποῦσ’ αἳ φανῶσ’ αὐθαίρετοι.

ΧΟ. Λείπει μὲν οὐδ’ ἃ πρόσθεν ᾔδεμεν τὸ μὴ οὐ
βαρύστον’ εἶναι· πρὸς δ’ ἐκείνοισιν τί φῄς;

ΕΞ. Ὁ μὲν τάχιστος τῶν λόγων εἰπεῖν τε καὶ
1235 μαθεῖν, τέθνηκε θεῖον Ἰοκάστης κάρα.

ΧΟ. Ὦ δυστάλαινα, πρὸς τίνος ποτ’ αἰτίας;

ΕΞ. Αὐτὴ πρὸς αὑτῆς. Τῶν δὲ πραχθέντων τὰ μὲν
ἄλγιστ’ ἄπεστιν· ἡ γὰρ ὄψις οὐ πάρα.
Ὅμως δ’, ὅσον γε κἀν ἐμοὶ μνήμης ἔνι,
1240 πεύσῃ τὰ κείνης ἀθλίας παθήματα.
Ὅπως γὰρ ὀργῇ χρωμένη παρῆλθ’ ἔσω
θυρῶνος, ἵετ’ εὐθὺ πρὸς τὰ νυμφικὰ
λέχη, κόμην σπῶσ’ ἀμφιδεξίοις ἀκμαῖς.
Πύλας δ’ ὅπως εἰσῆλθ’ ἐπιρράξασ’ ἔσω,
1245 κάλει τὸν ἤδη Λάϊον πάλαι νεκρόν,
μνήμην παλαιῶν σπερμάτων ἔχουσ’, ὑφ’ ὧν
θάνοι μὲν αὐτός, τὴν δὲ τίκτουσαν λίποι
τοῖς οἷσιν αὐτοῦ δύστεκνον παιδουργίαν·
γοᾶτο δ’ εὐνάς, ἔνθα δύστηνος διπλοῦς
1250 ἐξ ἀνδρὸς ἄνδρα καὶ τέκν’ ἐκ τέκνων τέκοι.
Χὤπως μὲν ἐκ τῶνδ’ οὐκέτ’ οἶδ’ ἀπόλλυται·

βοῶν γὰρ εἰσέπαισεν Οἰδίπους, ὑφ’ οὗ
οὐκ ἦν τὸ κείνης ἐκθεάσασθαι κακόν,
ἀλλ’ εἰς ἐκεῖνον περιπολοῦντ’ ἐλεύσσομεν·
1255 φοίτα γὰρ ἡμᾶς ἔγχος ἐξαιτῶν πορεῖν,
γυναῖκά τ’ οὐ γυναῖκα, μητρῴαν δ’ ὅπου
κίχοι διπλῆν ἄρουραν οὗ τε καὶ τέκνων.
Λυσσῶντι δ’ αὐτῷ δαιμόνων δείκνυσί τις·
οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἀνδρῶν, οἳ παρῆμεν ἐγγύθεν.
1260 Δεινὸν δ’ ἀΰσας, ὡς ὑφηγητοῦ τινος
πύλαις διπλαῖς ἐνήλατ’, ἐκ δὲ πυθμένων
ἔκλινε κοῖλα κλῆθρα κἀμπίπτει στέγῃ.
Οὗ δὴ κρεμαστὴν τὴν γυναῖκ’ ἐσείδομεν,
πλεκταῖς ἐώραις ἐμπεπλεγμένην· ὁ δὲ
1265 ὅπως ὁρᾷ νιν, δεινὰ βρυχηθεὶς τάλας,
χαλᾷ κρεμαστὴν ἀρτάνην· ἐπεὶ δὲ γῇ
ἔκειθ’ ὁ τλήμων, δεινὰ δ’ ἦν τἀνθένδ’ ὁρᾶν.
Ἀποσπάσας γὰρ εἱμάτων χρυσηλάτους
περόνας ἀπ’ αὐτῆς, αἷσιν ἐξεστέλλετο,
1270 ἄρας ἔπαισεν ἄρθρα τῶν αὐτοῦ κύκλων,
αὐδῶν τοιαῦθ’, ὁθούνεκ’ οὐκ ὄψοιντό νιν
οὔθ’ οἷ’ ἔπασχεν οὔθ’ ὁποῖ’ ἔδρα κακά,
ἀλλ’ ἐν σκότῳ τὸ λοιπὸν οὓς μὲν οὐκ ἔδει
ὀψοίαθ’, οὓς δ’ ἔχρῃζεν οὐ γνωσοίατο.
1275 Τοιαῦτ’ ἐφυμνῶν πολλάκις τε κοὐχ ἅπαξ
ἤρασσ’ ἐπαίρων βλέφαρα· φοίνιαι δ’ ὁμοῦ
γλῆναι γένει’ ἔτεγγον, οὐδ’ ἀνίεσαν
φόνου μυδώσας σταγόνας, ἀλλ’ ὁμοῦ μέλας
ὄμβρος χαλάζης αἵματός τ’ ἐτέγγετο.
1280 Τάδ’ ἐκ δυοῖν ἔρρωγεν, οὐ μόνου, κακά,
ἀλλ’ ἀνδρὶ καὶ γυναικὶ συμμιγῆ κακά.
Ὁ πρὶν παλαιὸς δ’ ὄλβος ἦν πάροιθε μὲν
ὄλβος δικαίως· νῦν δὲ τῇδε θἠμέρᾳ
στεναγμός, ἄτη, θάνατος, αἰσχύνη, κακῶν
1285 ὅσ’ ἐστὶ πάντων ὀνόματ’, οὐδέν ἐστ’ ἀπόν.

ΧΟ. Νῦν δ’ ἔσθ’ ὁ τλήμων ἔν τινι σχολῇ κακοῦ;

ΕΞ. Βοᾷ διοίγειν κλῇθρα καὶ δηλοῦν τινα
τοῖς πᾶσι Καδμείοισι τὸν πατροκτόνον,
τὸν μητρὸς - αὐδῶν ἀνόσι᾽ οὐδὲ ῥητά μοι,
1290 ὡς ἐκ χθονὸς ῥίψων ἑαυτόν, οὐδ᾽ ἔτι
μενῶν δόμοις ἀραῖος ὡς ἠράσατο.
Ῥώμης γε μέντοι καὶ προηγητοῦ τινος
δεῖται· τὸ γὰρ νόσημα μεῖζον ἢ φέρειν.
Δείξει δὲ καὶ σοί· κλῇθρα γὰρ πυλῶν τάδε
1295 διοίγεται· θέαμα δ᾽ εἰσόψει τάχα
τοιοῦτον οἷον καὶ στυγοῦντ᾽ ἐποικτίσαι.

ΧΟ. Ὦ δεινὸν ἰδεῖν πάθος ἀνθρώποις,
ὦ δεινότατον πάντων ὅσ᾽ ἐγὼ
προσέκυρσ᾽ ἤδη· τίς σ᾽, ὦ τλῆμον,
1300 προσέβη μανία; τίς ὁ πηδήσας
μείζονα δαίμων τῶν μακίστων
πρὸς σῇ δυσδαίμονι μοίρᾳ;
Φεῦ φεῦ, δύσταν᾽· ἀλλ᾽ οὐδ᾽ ἐσιδεῖν
δύναμαί σε, θέλων πόλλ᾽ ἀνερέσθαι,
1305 πολλὰ πυθέσθαι, πολλὰ δ᾽ ἀθρῆσαι·
τοίαν φρίκην παρέχεις μοι.

ΟΙ. Αἰαῖ, αἰαῖ, δύστανος ἐγώ,
ποῖ γᾶς φέρομαι τλάμων; πᾶ μοι
1310 φθογγὰ διαπωτᾶται φοράδην;
ἰὼ δαῖμον, ἵν᾽ ἐξήλου.

ΧΟ. Ἐς δεινὸν οὐδ᾽ ἀκουστὸν οὐδ᾽ ἐπόψιμον.

ΟΙ. Ἰὼ σκότου Str. 1 .
νέφος ἐμὸν ἀπότροπον, ἐπιπλόμενον ἄφατον,
ἀδάματόν τε καὶ δυσούριστόν ‹μοι›.
Οἴμοι,
οἴμοι μάλ’ αὖθις· οἷον εἰσέδυ μ’ ἄμα
κέντρων τε τῶνδ’ οἴστρημα καὶ μνήμη κακῶν.

ΧΟ. Καὶ θαῦμά γ’ οὐδὲν ἐν τοσοῖσδε πήμασιν
διπλᾶ σε πενθεῖν καὶ διπλᾶ φορεῖν κακά.

ΟΙ. Ἰὼ φίλος, Ant. 1 .
σὺ μὲν ἐμὸς ἐπίπολος ἔτι μόνιμος· ἔτι γὰρ
ὑπομένεις με τὸν τυφλὸν κηδεύων.
Φεῦ φεῦ,
οὐ γάρ με λήθεις, ἀλλὰ γιγνώσκω σαφῶς,
καίπερ σκοτεινός, τήν γε σὴν αὐδὴν ὅμως.

ΧΟ. Ὦ δεινὰ δράσας, πῶς ἔτλης τοιαῦτα σὰς
ὄψεις μαρᾶναι; τίς σ’ ἐπῆρε δαιμόνων;

ΟΙ. Ἀπόλλων τάδ’ ἦν, Ἀπόλλων, φίλοι, Str. 2 .
ὁ κακὰ κακὰ τελῶν ἐμὰ τάδ’ ἐμὰ πάθεα.
Ἔπαισε δ’ αὐτόχειρ νιν οὔ-
τις, ἀλλ’ ἐγὼ τλάμων.
Τί γὰρ ἔδει μ’ ὁρᾶν,
ὅτῳ γ’ ὁρῶντι μηδὲν ἦν ἰδεῖν γλυκύ;

ΧΟ. Ἦν ταῦθ’ ὅπωσπερ καὶ σὺ φής.

ΟΙ. Τί δῆτ’ ἐμοὶ βλεπτὸν ἦν
στερκτόν; ἢ προσήγορον
ἔτ’ ἔστ’ ἀκούειν ἡδονᾷ, φίλοι;
Ἀπάγετ’ ἐκτόπιον ὅτι τάχιστά με,
ἀπάγετ’, ὦ φίλοι, τὸν ὄλεθρον μέγαν,
τὸν καταρατότατον,
ἔτι δὲ καὶ θεοῖς ἐχθρότατον βροτῶν.

ΧΟ. Δείλαιε τοῦ νοῦ τῆς τε συμφορᾶς ἴσον,
ὥς σ’ ἠθέλησα μηδαμὰ γνῶναί ποτ’ ἄν.

ΟΙ. Ὄλοιθ’ ὅστις ἦν ὃς ἀγρίας πέδας Ant. 2 .
νομάδος ἐπὶ πόας ἔλαβέ μ’ ἀπό τε φόνου
ἔρυτο κἀνέσωσεν, οὐ-
δὲν εἰς χάριν πράσσων.
Τότε γὰρ ἂν θανὼν
οὐκ ἦν φίλοισιν οὐδ’ ἐμοὶ τοσόνδ’ ἄχος.

ΧΟ. Θέλοντι κἀμοὶ τοῦτ’ ἂν ἦν.

ΟΙ. Οὔκουν πατρός γ’ ἂν φονεὺς
ἦλθον, οὐδὲ νυμφίος

βροτοῖς ἐκλήθην ὧν ἔφυν ἄπο.
Νῦν δ’ ἄθεος μέν εἰμ’, ἀνοσίων δὲ παῖς,
ὁμογενὴς δ’ ἀφ’ ὧν αὐτὸς ἔφυν τάλας.
Εἰ δέ τι πρεσβύτερον
ἔτι κακοῦ κακόν, τοῦτ’ ἔλαχ’ Οἰδίπους.

ΧΟ. Οὐκ οἶδ’ ὅπως σε φῶ βεβουλεῦσθαι καλῶς.
κρείσσων γὰρ ἦσθα μηκέτ’ ὢν ἢ ζῶν τυφλός.

ΟΙ. Ὡς μὲν τάδ’ οὐχ ὧδ’ ἔστ’ ἄριστ’ εἰργασμένα,
μή μ’ ἐκδίδασκε, μηδὲ συμβούλευ’ ἔτι.
Ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐκ οἶδ’ ὄμμασιν ποίοις βλέπων
πατέρα ποτ’ ἂν προσεῖδον εἰς Ἅιδου μολών,
οὐδ’ αὖ τάλαιναν μητέρ’, οἶν ἐμοὶ δυοῖν
ἔργ’ ἐστὶ κρείσσον’ ἀγχόνης εἰργασμένα.
Ἀλλ’ ἡ τέκνων δῆτ’ ὄψις ἦν ἐφίμερος,
βλαστοῦσ’ ὅπως ἔβλαστε, προσλεύσσειν ἐμοί;
Οὐ δῆτα τοῖς γ’ ἐμοῖσιν ὀφθαλμοῖς ποτε·
οὐδ’ ἄστυ γ’, οὐδὲ πύργος, οὐδὲ δαιμόνων
ἀγάλματ’ ἱερά, τῶν ὁ παντλήμων ἐγὼ
κάλλιστ’ ἀνὴρ εἷς ἔν γε ταῖς Θήβαις τραφεὶς
ἀπεστέρησ’ ἐμαυτόν, αὐτὸς ἐννέπων
ὠθεῖν ἅπαντας τὸν ἀσεβῆ, τὸν ἐκ θεῶν
φανέντ’ ἄναγνον καὶ γένους τοῦ Λαΐου.
Τοιάνδ’ ἐγὼ κηλῖδα μηνύσας ἐμὴν
ὀρθοῖς ἔμελλον ὄμμασιν τούτους ὁρᾶν;
Ἥκιστά γ’· ἀλλ’ εἰ τῆς ἀκουούσης ἔτ’ ἦν
πηγῆς δι’ ὤτων φραγμός, οὐκ ἂν ἐσχόμην
τὸ μὰποκλῆσαι τοὐμὸν ἄθλιον δέμας,
ἵν’ ἦ τυφλός τε καὶ κλύων μηδέν· τὸ γὰρ
τὴν φροντίδ’ ἔξω τῶν κακῶν οἰκεῖν γλυκύ.
Ἰὼ Κιθαιρών, τί μ’ ἐδέχου; τί μ’ οὐ λαβὼν
ἔκτεινας εὐθύς, ὡς ἔδειξα μήποτε
ἐμαυτὸν ἀνθρώποισιν ἔνθεν ἦ γεγώς;

Ὦ Πόλυβε καὶ Κόρινθε καὶ τὰ πάτρια
λόγῳ παλαιὰ δώμαθ’, οἷον ἆρά με
κάλλος κακῶν ὕπουλον ἐξεθρέψατε·
νῦν γὰρ κακός τ’ ὢν κἀκ κακῶν εὑρίσκομαι.
Ὦ τρεῖς κέλευθοι καὶ κεκρυμμένη νάπη,
δρυμός τε καὶ στενωπὸς ἐν τριπλαῖς ὁδοῖς,
αἳ τοὐμὸν αἷμα τῶν ἐμῶν χειρῶν ἄπο
ἐπίετε πατρός, ἆρά μου μέμνησθ’ ὅτι
οἷ’ ἔργα δράσας ὑμὶν εἶτα δεῦρ’ ἰὼν
ὁποῖ’ ἔπρασσον αὖθις; Ὦ γάμοι, γάμοι,
ἐφύσαθ’ ἡμᾶς, καὶ φυτεύσαντες πάλιν
ἀνεῖτε ταὐτὸν σπέρμα, κἀπεδείξατε
πατέρας, ἀδελφούς, παῖδας, αἷμ’ ἐμφύλιον,
νύμφας γυναῖκας μητέρας τε, χὠπόσα
αἴσχιστ’ ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν ἔργα γίγνεται.
Ἀλλ’, οὐ γὰρ αὐδᾶν ἔσθ’ ἃ μηδὲ δρᾶν καλόν,
ὅπως τάχιστα, πρὸς θεῶν, ἔξω μέ που
καλύψατ’, ἢ φονεύσατ’, ἢ θαλάσσιον
ἐκρίψατ’, ἔνθα μήποτ’ εἰσόψεσθ’ ἔτι.
Ἴτ’, ἀξιώσατ’ ἀνδρὸς ἀθλίου θιγεῖν·
πίθεσθε, μὴ δείσητε· τἀμὰ γὰρ κακὰ
οὐδεὶς οἷός τε πλὴν ἐμοῦ φέρειν βροτῶν.

ΧΟ. Ἀλλ’ ὧν ἐπαιτεῖς ἐς δέον πάρεσθ’ ὅδε
Κρέων τὸ πράσσειν καὶ τὸ βουλεύειν, ἐπεὶ
χώρας λέλειπται μοῦνος ἀντὶ σοῦ φύλαξ.

ΟΙ. Οἴμοι, τί δῆτα λέξομεν πρὸς τόνδ’ ἔπος;
τίς μοι φανεῖται πίστις ἔνδικος; τὰ γὰρ
πάρος πρὸς αὐτὸν πάντ’ ἐφεύρημαι κακός.

ΚΡ. Οὔθ’ ὡς γελαστής, Οἰδίπους, ἐλήλυθα,

οὔθ’ ὡς ὀνειδιῶν τι τῶν πάρος κακῶν.
Ἀλλ’ εἰ τὰ θνητῶν μὴ καταισχύνεσθ’ ἔτι
1425 γένεθλα, τὴν γοῦν πάντα βόσκουσαν φλόγα
αἰδεῖσθ’ ἄνακτος Ἡλίου, τοιόνδ’ ἄγος
ἀκάλυπτον οὕτω δεικνύναι, τὸ μήτε γῆ
μήτ’ ὄμβρος ἱερὸς μήτε φῶς προσδέξεται.
Ἀλλ’ ὡς τάχιστ’ ἐς οἶκον ἐσκομίζετε·
1430 τοῖς ἐν γένει γὰρ τἀγγενῆ μάλισθ’ ὁρᾶν
μόνοις τ’ ἀκούειν εὐσεβῶς ἔχει κακά.

ΟΙ. Πρὸς θεῶν, ἐπείπερ ἐλπίδος μ’ ἀπέσπασας,
ἄριστος ἐλθὼν πρὸς κάκιστον ἄνδρ’ ἐμέ,
πιθοῦ τί μοι· πρὸς σοῦ γάρ, οὐδ’ ἐμοῦ, φράσω.
1435 ΚΡ. Καὶ τοῦ με χρείας ὧδε λιπαρεῖς τυχεῖν;

ΟΙ. Ῥῖψόν με γῆς ἐκ τῆσδ’ ὅσον τάχισθ’, ὅπου
θνητῶν φανοῦμαι μηδενὸς προσήγορος.

ΚΡ. Ἔδρασ’ ἄν, εἶ τοῦτ’ ἴσθ’, ἄν, εἰ μὴ τοῦ θεοῦ
πρώτιστ’ ἔχρῃζον ἐκμαθεῖν τί πρακτέον.
1440 ΟΙ. Ἀλλ’ ἦ γ’ ἐκείνου πᾶσ’ ἐδηλώθη φάτις,
τὸν πατροφόντην, τὸν ἀσεβῆ μ’ ἀπολλύναι.

ΚΡ. Οὕτως ἐλέχθη ταῦθ’· ὅμως δ’, ἵν’ ἔσταμεν
χρείας, ἄμεινον ἐκμαθεῖν τί δραστέον.

ΟΙ. Οὕτως ἄρ’ ἀνδρὸς ἀθλίου πεύσεσθ’ ὕπερ;

ΚΡ. Καὶ γὰρ σὺ νῦν τἀν τῷ θεῷ πίστιν φέροις.

ΟΙ. Καὶ σοί γ’ ἐπισκήπτω τε καὶ προστρέψομαι·
τῆς μὲν κατ’ οἴκους αὐτὸς ὃν θέλεις τάφον
θοῦ· καὶ γὰρ ὀρθῶς τῶν γε σῶν τελεῖς ὕπερ·
ἐμοῦ δὲ μήποτ’ ἀξιωθήτω τόδε
πατρῷον ἄστυ ζῶντος οἰκητοῦ τυχεῖν·
ἀλλ’ ἔα με ναίειν ὄρεσιν, ἔνθα κλῄζεται
οὐμὸς Κιθαιρὼν οὗτος, ὃν μήτηρ τέ μοι
πατήρ τ’ ἐθέσθην ζῶντε κύριον τάφον,
ἵν’ ἐξ ἐκείνων οἵ μ’ ἀπωλλύτην, θάνω.
Καίτοι τοσοῦτόν γ’ οἶδα, μήτε μ’ ἂν νόσον
μήτ’ ἄλλο πέρσαι μηδέν· οὐ γὰρ ἄν ποτε
θνῄσκων ἐσώθην, μὴ ‘πί τῳ δεινῷ κακῷ.
Ἀλλ’ ἡ μὲν ἡμῶν μοῖρ’ ὅποιπερ εἶσ’ ἴτω·
παίδων δὲ τῶν μὲν ἀρσένων μή μοι, Κρέων,
προσθῇ μέριμναν· ἄνδρες εἰσίν, ὥστε μὴ
σπάνιν ποτὲ σχεῖν, ἔνθ’ ἂν ὦσι, τοῦ βίου·
ταῖν δ’ ἀθλίαιν οἰκτραῖν τε παρθένοιν ἐμαῖν,
αἷν οὔποθ’ ἡμὴ χωρὶς ἐστάθη βορᾶς
τράπεζ’ ἄνευ τοῦδ’ ἀνδρός, ἀλλ’ ὅσων ἐγὼ
ψαύοιμι, πάντων τῶνδ’ ἀεὶ μετειχέτην·
αἷν μοι μέλεσθαι· καὶ μάλιστα μὲν χεροῖν
ψαῦσαί μ’ ἔασον κἀποκλαύσασθαι κακά.
Ἴθ’, ὦναξ,
ἴθ’, ὦ γονῇ γενναῖε· χερσί τἀν θιγὼν
δοκοῖμ’ ἔχειν σφᾶς, ὥσπερ ἡνίκ’ ἔβλεπον.
Τί φημί;
οὐ δὴ κλύω που, πρὸς θεῶν, τοῖν μοι φίλοιν
δακρυρροούντοιν, καί μ’ ἐποικτίρας Κρέων
ἔπεμψέ μοι τὰ φίλτατ’ ἐγγόνοιν ἐμοῖν;
λέγω τι;

ΚΡ. Λέγεις· ἐγὼ γάρ εἰμ’ ὁ πορσύνας τάδε,

γνοὺς τὴν παροῦσαν τέρψιν, ἥ σ’ εἶχεν πάλαι.

ΟΙ. Ἀλλ’ εὐτυχοίης, καί σε τῆσδε τῆς ὁδοῦ
δαίμων ἄμεινον ἢ ‘μὲ φρουρήσας τύχοι.
Ὦ τέκνα, ποῦ ποτ’ ἐστέ; δεῦρ’ ἴτ’, ἔλθετε
ὡς τὰς ἀδελφὰς τάσδε τὰς ἐμὰς χέρας,
αἳ τοῦ φυτουργοῦ πατρὸς ὑμὶν ὧδ’ ὁρᾶν
τὰ πρόσθε λαμπρὰ προὐξένησαν ὄμματα·
ὃς ὑμίν, ὦ τέκν’, οὔθ’ ὁρῶν οὔθ’ ἱστορῶν,
πατὴρ ἐφάνθην ἔνθεν αὐτὸς ἠρόθην.
Καὶ σφὼ δακρύω, προσβλέπειν γὰρ οὐ σθένω,
νοούμενος τὰ λοιπὰ τοῦ πικροῦ βίου,
οἷον βιῶναι σφὼ πρὸς ἀνθρώπων χρεών.
Ποίας γὰρ ἀστῶν ἥξετ’ εἰς ὁμιλίας,
ποίας δ’ ἑορτάς, ἔνθεν οὐ κεκλαυμέναι
πρὸς οἶκον ἵξεσθ’ ἀντὶ τῆς θεωρίας;
Ἀλλ’ ἡνίκ’ ἂν δὴ πρὸς γάμων ἥκητ’ ἀκμάς,
τίς οὗτος ἔσται, τίς παραρρίψει, τέκνα,
τοιαῦτ’ ὀνείδη λαμβάνων ἃ τοῖς ἐμοῖς
γονεῦσιν ἔσται σφῷν θ’ ὁμοῦ δηλήματα;
Τί γὰρ κακῶν ἄπεστι; τὸν πατέρα πατὴρ
ὑμῶν ἔπεφνεν· τὴν τεκοῦσαν ἥροσεν,
ὅθεν περ αὐτὸς ἐσπάρη, κἀκ τῶν ἴσων
ἐκτήσαθ’ ὑμᾶς, ὧνπερ αὐτὸς ἐξέφυ.
Τοιαῦτ’ ὀνειδιεῖσθε. Κᾆτα τίς γαμεῖ;
οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδείς, ὦ τέκν’, ἀλλὰ δηλαδὴ
χέρσους φθαρῆναι κἀγάμους ὑμᾶς χρεών.
Ὦ παῖ Μενοικέως, ἀλλ’ ἐπεὶ μόνος πατὴρ
ταύταιν λέλειψαι, νὼ γάρ, ὢ ‘φυτεύσαμεν,
ὀλώλαμεν δύ’ ὄντε, μή σφε περιίδῃς
πτωχὰς ἀνάνδρους ἐγγενεῖς ἀλωμένας,
μηδ’ ἐξισώσῃς τάσδε τοῖς ἐμοῖς κακοῖς.
Ἀλλ’ οἴκτισόν σφας, ὧδε τηλικάσδ’ ὁρῶν
πάντων ἐρήμους, πλὴν ὅσον τὸ σὸν μέρος.
Ξύννευσον, ὦ γενναῖε, σῇ ψαύσας χερί.
Σφῷν δ’, ὦ τέκν’, εἰ μὲν εἰχέτην ἤδη φρένας,

πόλλ’ ἂν παρῄνουν· νῦν δὲ τοῦτ’ εὔχεσθέ μοι
οὐ καιρὸς ἐᾷ ζῆν, τοῦ βίου δὲ λῴονος
ὑμᾶς κυρῆσαι τοῦ φυτεύσαντος πατρός.
1515 ΚΡ. Ἅλις ἵν’ ἐξήκεις δακρύων· ἀλλ’ ἴθι στέγης ἔσω.

ΟΙ. Πειστέον, κεἰ μηδὲν ἡδύ.

ΚΡ. Πάντα γὰρ καιρῷ καλά.

ΟΙ. Οἶσθ’ ἐφ’ οἷς οὖν εἶμι;

ΚΡ. Λέξεις, καὶ τότ’ εἴσομαι κλύων.

ΟΙ. Γῆς μ’ ὅπως πέμψεις ἄποικον.

ΚΡ. Τοῦ θεοῦ μ’ αἰτεῖς δόσιν.

ΟΙ. Ἀλλὰ θεοῖς γ’ ἔχθιστος ἥκω.

ΚΡ. Τοιγαροῦν τεύξῃ τάχα.

ΟΙ. Φῂς τάδ’ οὖν;

ΚΡ. Ἃ μὴ φρονῶ γὰρ οὐ φιλῶ λέγειν μάτην.

ΟΙ. Ἄπαγέ νύν μ’ ἐντεῦθεν ἤδη.

ΚΡ. Στεῖχέ νυν, τέκνων δ’ ἀφοῦ.

ΟΙ. Μηδαμῶς ταύτας γ’ ἕλῃ μου.

ΚΡ. Πάντα μὴ βούλου κρατεῖν·
καὶ γὰρ ἀκράτησας οὔ σοι τῷ βίῳ ξυνέσπετο.

ΧΟ. Ὦ πάτρας Θήβης ἔνοικοι, λεύσσετ’, Οἰδίπους ὅδε,
ὃς τὰ κλείν’ αἰνίγματ’ ᾔδει καὶ κράτιστος ἦν ἀνήρ,
οὗ τίς οὐ ζήλῳ πολιτῶν ἦν τύχαις ἐπιβλέπων,
εἰς ὅσον κλύδωνα δεινῆς συμφορᾶς ἐλήλυθεν,
ὥστε θνητὸν ὄντ’ ἐκείνην τὴν τελευταίαν ἰδεῖν
ἡμέραν ἐπισκοποῦντα μηδέν’ ὀλβίζειν, πρὶν ἂν
τέρμα τοῦ βίου περάσῃ μηδὲν ἀλγεινὸν παθών.

Φιλοκτήτης - PHILOCTETES

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ
Ἀκτὴ μὲν ἥδε τῆς περιρρύτου χθονὸς
Λήμνου, βροτοῖς ἄστιπτος οὐδ’ οἰκουμένη,
ἔνθ’, ὦ κρατίστου πατρὸς Ἑλλήνων τραφεὶς
Ἀχιλλέως παῖ Νεοπτόλεμε, τὸν Μηλιᾶ
Ποίαντος υἱὸν ἐξέθηκ’ ἐγώ ποτε,
ταχθεὶς τόδ’ ἔρδειν τῶν ἀνασσόντων ὕπο,
νόσῳ καταστάζοντα διαβόρῳ πόδα,
ὅτ’ οὔτε λοιβῆς ἡμὶν οὔτε θυμάτων
παρῆν ἐκήλοις προσθιγεῖν, ἀλλ’ ἀγρίαις
κατεῖχ’ ἀεὶ πᾶν στρατόπεδον δυσφημίαις,
βοῶν, στενάζων. Ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν τί δεῖ
λέγειν; ἀκμὴ γὰρ οὐ μακρῶν ἡμῖν λόγων,
μὴ καὶ μάθῃ μ’ ἥκοντα κἀκχέω τὸ πᾶν
σόφισμα τῷ νιν αὐτίχ’ αἱρήσειν δοκῶ.
Ἀλλ’ ἔργον ἤδη σὸν τὰ λοίφ’ ὑπηρετεῖν,
σκοπεῖν θ’ ὅπου ‘στ’ ἐνταῦθα δίστομος πέτρα
τοιάδ’, ἵν’ ἐν ψύχει μὲν ἡλίου διπλῆ
πάρεστιν ἐνθάκησις, ἐν θέρει δ’ ὕπνον
δι’ ἀμφιτρῆτος αὐλίου πέμπει πνοή·
βαιὸν δ’ ἔνερθεν ἐξ ἀριστερᾶς τάχ’ ἂν
ἴδοις ποτὸν κρηναῖον, εἴπερ ἐστὶ σῶν.
Ἃ μοι προσελθὼν σῖγα σήμαιν’ εἴτ’ ἔχει
χῶρον πρὸς αὐτὸν τόνδ’ ‹ἔτ’› εἴτ’ ἄλλῃ κυρεῖ,
ὡς τἀπίλοιπα τῶν λόγων σὺ μὲν κλύῃς,
ἐγὼ δὲ φράζω, κοινὰ δ’ ἐξ ἀμφοῖν ἴῃ.

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ
Ἄναξ Ὀδυσσεῦ, τοὔργον οὐ μακρὰν λέγεις·
δοκῶ γὰρ οἷον εἶπας ἄντρον εἰσορᾶν.

ΟΔ. Ἄνωθεν, ἢ κάτωθεν; οὐ γὰρ ἐννοῶ.

ΝΕ. Τόδ’ ἐξύπερθε, καὶ στίβου γ’ οὐδεὶς κτύπος.
30 ΟΔ. Ὅρα καθ’ ὕπνον μὴ καταυλισθεὶς κυρῇ.

ΝΕ. Ὁρῶ κενὴν οἴκησιν ἀνθρώπων δίχα.

ΟΔ. Οὐδ’ ἔνδον οἰκοποιός ἐστί τις τροφή;

ΝΕ. Στιπτή γε φυλλὰς ὡς ἐναυλίζοντί τῳ.

ΟΔ. Τὰ δ’ ἄλλ’ ἔρημα, κοὐδέν ἐσθ’ ὑπόστεγον;
35 ΝΕ. Αὐτόξυλόν γ’ ἔκπωμα, φλαυρουργοῦ τινος
τεχνήματ’ ἀνδρός, καὶ πυρεῖ’ ὁμοῦ τάδε.

ΟΔ. Κείνου τὸ θησαύρισμα σημαίνεις τόδε.

ΝΕ. Ἰοὺ ἰού· καὶ ταῦτά γ’ ἄλλα θάλπεται
ῥάκη, βαρείας του νοσηλείας πλέα.
40 ΟΔ. Ἀνὴρ κατοικεῖ τούσδε τοὺς τόπους σαφῶς,
κἄστ’ οὐχ ἑκάς που· πῶς γὰρ ἂν νοσῶν ἀνὴρ
κῶλον παλαιᾷ κηρὶ προσβαίη μακράν;

ἀλλ’ ἢ ‘πὶ φορβῆς νόστον ἐξελήλυθεν,
ἢ φύλλον εἴ τι νώδυνον κάτοιδέ που.
Τὸν οὖν παρόντα πέμψον εἰς κατασκοπήν,
μὴ καὶ λάθῃ με προσπεσών· ὡς μᾶλλον ἂν
ἕλοιτό μ’ ἢ τοὺς πάντας Ἀργείους λαβεῖν.

ΝΕ. Ἀλλ’ ἔρχεταί τε καὶ φυλάξεται στίβος·
σὺ δ’ εἴ τι χρῄζεις, φράζε δευτέρῳ λόγῳ.
ΟΔ. Ἀχιλλέως παῖ, δεῖ σ’ ἐφ’ οἷς ἐλήλυθας
γενναῖον εἶναι, μὴ μόνον τῷ σώματι,
ἀλλ’ ἤν τι καινὸν ὧν πρὶν οὐκ ἀκήκοας
κλύῃς, ὑπουργεῖν, ὡς ὑπηρέτης πάρει.

ΝΕ. Τί δῆτ’ ἄνωγας;

ΟΔ. Τὴν Φιλοκτήτου σε δεῖ
ψυχὴν ὅπως λόγοισιν ἐκκλέψεις λέγων.
Ὅταν σ’ ἐρωτᾷ τίς τε καὶ πόθεν πάρει,
λέγειν Ἀχιλλέως παῖς· τόδ’ οὐχὶ κλεπτέον·
πλεῖς δ’ ὡς πρὸς οἶκον, ἐκλιπὼν τὸ ναυτικὸν
στράτευμ’ Ἀχαιῶν, ἔχθος ἐχθήρας μέγα,
οἵ σ’ ἐν λιταῖς στείλαντες ἐξ οἴκων μολεῖν,
μόνην ἔχοντες τήνδ’ ἅλωσιν Ἰλίου,
οὐκ ἠξίωσαν τῶν Ἀχιλλείων ὅπλων
ἐλθόντι δοῦναι κυρίως αἰτουμένῳ,
ἀλλ’ αὖτ’ Ὀδυσσεῖ παρέδοσαν, λέγων ὅσ’ ἂν
θέλῃς καθ’ ἡμῶν ἔσχατ’ ἐσχάτων κακά·
τούτῳ γὰρ οὐδέν μ’ ἀλγυνεῖς· εἰ δ’ ἐργάσῃ
μὴ ταῦτα, λύπην πᾶσιν Ἀργείοις βαλεῖς·
εἰ γὰρ τὰ τοῦδε τόξα μὴ ληφθήσεται,
οὐκ ἔστι πέρσαι σοι τὸ Δαρδάνου πέδον.
Ὡς δ’ ἔστ’ ἐμοὶ μὲν οὐχί, σοὶ δ’ ὁμιλία

πρὸς τόνδε πιστὴ καὶ βέβαιος, ἔκμαθε·
σὺ μὲν πέπλευκας οὔτ’ ἔνορκος οὐδενὶ
οὔτ’ ἐξ ἀνάγκης οὔτε τοῦ πρώτου στόλου,
ἐμοὶ δὲ τούτων οὐδέν ἐστ’ ἀρνήσιμον·
ὥστ’ εἴ με τόξων ἐγκρατὴς αἰσθήσεται,
ὄλωλα, καὶ σὲ προσδιαφθερῶ ξυνών·
ἀλλ’ αὐτὸ τοῦτο δεῖ σοφισθῆναι, κλοπεὺς
ὅπως γενήσῃ τῶν ἀνικήτων ὅπλων.
Ἔξοιδα καὶ φύσει σε μὴ πεφυκότα
τοιαῦτα φωνεῖν μηδὲ τεχνᾶσθαι κακά·
ἀλλ’ ἡδὺ γάρ τοι κτῆμα τῆς νίκης λαβεῖν,
τόλμα· δίκαιοι δ’ αὖθις ἐκφανούμεθα·
νῦν δ’ εἰς ἀναιδὲς ἡμέρας μέρος βραχὺ
δός μοι σεαυτόν, κἄτα τὸν λοιπὸν χρόνον
κέκλησο πάντων εὐσεβέστατος βροτῶν.

ΝΕ. Ἐγὼ μὲν οὓς ἂν τῶν λόγων ἀλγῶ κλύων,
Λαερτίου παῖ, τούσδε καὶ πράσσειν στυγῶ·
ἔφυν γὰρ οὐδὲν ἐκ τέχνης πράσσειν κακῆς,
οὔτ’ αὐτὸς οὔθ’, ὥς φασιν, οὐκφύσας ἐμέ.
Ἀλλ’ εἶμ’ ἕτοιμος πρὸς βίαν τὸν ἄνδρ’ ἄγειν
καὶ μὴ δόλοισιν· οὐ γὰρ ἐξ ἑνὸς ποδὸς
ἡμᾶς τοσούσδε πρὸς βίαν χειρώσεται.
Πεμφθείς γε μέντοι σοὶ ξυνεργάτης ὀκνῶ
προδότης καλεῖσθαι· βούλομαι δ’, ἄναξ, καλῶς
δρῶν ἐξαμαρτεῖν μᾶλλον ἢ νικᾶν κακῶς.

ΟΔ. Ἐσθλοῦ πατρὸς παῖ, καὐτὸς ὢν νέος ποτὲ
γλῶσσαν μὲν ἀργόν, χεῖρα δ’ εἶχον ἐργάτιν·
νῦν δ’ εἰς ἔλεγχον ἐξιὼν ὁρῶ βροτοῖς
τὴν γλῶσσαν, οὐχὶ τἄργα, πάνθ’ ἡγουμένην.
ΝΕ. Τί οὖν μ’ ἄνωγας ἄλλο πλὴν ψευδῆ λέγειν;

ΟΔ. Λέγω σ’ ἐγὼ δόλῳ Φιλοκτήτην λαβεῖν.

ΝΕ. Τί δ’ ἐν δόλῳ δεῖ μᾶλλον ἢ πείσαντ’ ἄγειν;

ΟΔ. Οὐ μὴ πίθηται· πρὸς βίαν δ’ οὐκ ἂν λάβοις.

ΝΕ. Οὕτως ἔχει τι δεινὸν ἰσχύος θράσος;
105 ΟΔ. Ἰοὺς ἀφύκτους καὶ προπέμποντας φόνον.

ΝΕ. Οὐκ ἦρ’ ἐκείνῳ γ’ οὐδὲ προσμεῖξαι θρασύ;

ΟΔ. Οὔ, μὴ δόλῳ λαβόντα γ’, ὡς ἐγὼ λέγω.

ΝΕ. Οὐκ αἰσχρὸν ἡγῇ δῆτα τὸ ψευδῆ λέγειν;

ΟΔ. Οὔκ, εἰ τὸ σωθῆναί γε τὸ ψεῦδος φέρει.
110 ΝΕ. Πῶς οὖν βλέπων τις ταῦτα τολμήσει λακεῖν;

ΟΔ. Ὅταν τι δρᾷς εἰς κέρδος, οὐκ ὀκνεῖν πρέπει.

ΝΕ. Κέρδος δ’ ἐμοὶ τί τοῦτον ἐς Τροίαν μολεῖν;

ΟΔ. Αἰρεῖ τὰ τόξα ταῦτα τὴν Τροίαν μόνα.

ΝΕ. Οὐκ ἆρ’ ὁ πέρσων, ὡς ἐφάσκετ’, εἴμ’ ἐγώ;
115 ΟΔ. Οὔτ’ ἂν σὺ κείνων χωρὶς οὔτ’ ἐκεῖνα σοῦ.

ΝΕ. Θηρατέ’ ἄ‹ρα› γίγνοιτ’ ἄν, εἴπερ ὧδ’ ἔχει.

ΟΔ. Ὡς τοῦτό γ’ ἔρξας δύο φέρῃ δωρήματα.

ΝΕ. Ποίω; μαθὼν γὰρ οὐκ ἂν ἀρνοίμην τὸ δρᾶν.

ΟΔ. Σοφός τ’ ἂν αὐτὸς κἀγαθὸς κεκλῇ’ ἅμα.
120 ΝΕ. Ἴτω· ποήσω, πᾶσαν αἰσχύνην ἀφείς.

ΟΔ. Ἦ μνημονεύεις οὖν ἅ σοι παρῄνεσα;

ΝΕ. Σάφ’ ἴσθ’, ἐπείπερ εἰσάπαξ συνήνεσα.

ΟΔ. Σὺ μὲν μένων νυν κεῖνον ἐνθάδ’ ἐκδέχου,
ἐγὼ δ’ ἄπειμι, μὴ κατοπτευθῶ παρών,
καὶ τὸν σκοπὸν πρὸς ναῦν ἀποστελῶ πάλιν·
καὶ δεῦρ’, ἐάν μοι τοῦ χρόνου δοκῆτέ τι
κατασχολάζειν, αὖθις ἐκπέμψω πάλιν
τοῦτον τὸν αὐτὸν ἄνδρα, ναυκλήρου τρόποις
μορφὴν δολώσας, ὡς ἂν ἀγνοία προσῇ·
οὗ δῆτα, τέκνον, ποικίλως αὐδωμένου
δέχου τὰ συμφέροντα τῶν ἀεὶ λόγων.
Ἐγὼ δὲ πρὸς ναῦν εἶμι, σοὶ παρεὶς τάδε·
Ἑρμῆς δ’ ὁ πέμπων Δόλιος ἡγήσαιτο νῷν
Νίκη τ’ Ἀθάνα Πολιάς, ἣ σῴζει μ’ ἀεί.
ΧΟΡΟΣ
Τί χρή, τί χρή με, δέσποτ’, ἐν ξένᾳ ξένον Str. 1 .
στέγειν, ἢ τί λέγειν πρὸς ἄνδρ’ ὑπόπταν;
Φράζε μοι·
τέχνα γὰρ τέχνας ἑτέρας
προὔχει καὶ γνώμα παρ’ ὅτῳ
τὸ θεῖον Διὸς σκῆπτρον ἀνάσσεται·
σὲ δ’, ὦ τέκνον, τόδ’ ἐλήλυθεν
πᾶν κράτος ὠγύγιον· τό μοι ἔννεπε
τί σοι χρεὼν ὑπουργεῖν.

ΝΕ. Νῦν μέν, ἴσως γὰρ τόπον ἐσχατιαῖς
προσιδεῖν ἐθέλεις ὄντινα κεῖται,
δέρκου θαρσῶν· ὁπόταν δὲ μόλῃ
δεινὸς ὁδίτης, τῶνδ’ ἐκ μελάθρων
πρὸς ἐμὴν αἰεὶ χεῖρα προχωρῶν
πειρῶ τὸ παρὸν θεραπεύειν.
ΧΟ. Μέλον πάλαι μέλημά μοι λέγεις, ἄναξ, Ant. 1 .
φρουρεῖν ὅμμ’ ἐπὶ σῷ μάλιστα καιρῷ·

νῦν δέ μοι
λέγ’ αὐλὰς ποίας ἔνεδρος
ναίει καὶ χῶρον τίν’ ἔχει·
τὸ γάρ μοι μαθεῖν οὐκ ἀποκαίριον,
μὴ προσπεσών με λάθῃ ποθέν·
τίς τόπος ἢ τίς ἕδρα, τίν’ ἔχει στίβον,
ἔναυλον ἢ θυραῖον;

ΝΕ. Οἶκον μὲν ὁρᾷς τόνδ’ ἀμφίθυρον
πετρίνης κοίτης.

ΧΟ. Ποῦ γὰρ ὁ τλάμων αὐτὸς ἄπεστιν;

ΝΕ. Δῆλον ἔμοιγ’ ὡς φορβῆς χρείᾳ
στίβον ὀγμεύει τόνδε πέλας που·

ταύτην γὰρ ἔχειν βιοτῆς αὐτὸν
λόγος ἐστὶ φύσιν, θηροβολοῦντα
πτηνοῖς ἰοῖς, στυγερὸν στυγερῶς,
οὐδέ τιν’ αὐτῷ
παιῶνα κακῶν ἐπινωμᾶν.

ΧΟ. Οἰκτίρω νιν ἔγωγ’, ὅπως, Str. 2 .
μή του κηδομένου βροτῶν,
μηδὲ ξύντροφον ὄμμ’ ἔχων,
δύστανος, μόνος αἰεί,
νοσεῖ μὲν νόσον ἀγρίαν,
ἀλύει δ’ ἐπὶ παντί τῳ
χρείας ἱσταμένῳ· πῶς ποτε, πῶς
δύσμορος ἀντέχει;
Ὦ παλάμαι θνητῶν,
ὦ δύστανα γένη βροτῶν
οἷς μὴ μέτριος αἰών.
Οὗτος πρωτογόνων ἴσως Ant. 2 .
οἴκων οὐδενὸς ὕστερος,
πάντων ἄμμορος ἐν βίῳ
κεῖται μοῦνος ἀπ’ ἄλλων,
στικτῶν ἢ λασίων μετὰ
θηρῶν, ἔν τ’ ὀδύναις ὁμοῦ
λιμῷ τ’ οἰκτρὸς ἀνήκεστα μερι-
μνήματ’ ἔχων βαρεῖ·
ἃ δ’ ἀθυρόστομος
ἀχὼ τηλεφανὴς πικρὰς
οἰμωγὰς ὑποχεῖται.

ΝΕ. Οὐδὲν τούτων θαυμαστὸν ἐμοί·
θεῖα γάρ, εἴπερ κἀγώ τι φρονῶ,
καὶ τὰ παθήματα κεῖνα πρὸς αὐτὸν
τῆς ὠμόφρονος Χρύσης ἐπέβη,
καὶ νῦν ἃ πονεῖ δίχα κηδεμόνων,

οὐκ ἔσθ’ ὡς οὐ θεῶν του μελέτῃ,
τοῦ μὴ πρότερον τόνδ’ ἐπὶ Τροίᾳ
τεῖναι τὰ θεῶν ἀμάχητα βέλη,
πρὶν ὅδ’ ἐξήκοι χρόνος ᾧ λέγεται
200 χρῆναί σφ’ ὑπὸ τῶνδε δαμῆναι.

ΧΟ. Εὔστομ’ ἔχε, παῖ. Str. 3 .

ΝΕ. Τί τόδε;

ΧΟ. Προὐφάνη κτύπος,
φωτὸς σύντροφος ὡς τειρομένοιο,
ἤ που τῇδ’ ἢ τῇδε τόπων·
205 βάλλει, βάλλει μ’ ἐτύμα
φθογγά του στίβον κατ’ ἀνάγκαν
ἔρποντος, οὐδέ με λάθει
βαρεῖα τηλόθεν αὐδὰ
τρυσάνωρ· διάσημα γὰρ θροεῖ.
210 ΧΟ. Ἀλλ’ ἔχε, τέκνον, - Ant. 3 .

ΝΕ. Λέγ’ ὅ τι.

ΧΟ. φροντίδας νέας·
ὡς οὐκ ἔξεδρος, ἀλλ’ ἔντοπος ἀνήρ,
οὐ μολπὰν σύριγγος ἔχων,
ὡς ποιμὴν ἀγροβάτας,
215 ἀλλ’ ἤ που πταίων ὑπ’ ἀνάγκας

βοᾷ τηλωπὸν ἰωάν,
ἢ ναὸς ἄξενον αὐγά-
ζων ὅρμον· προβοᾷ γὰρ αἴλινον.

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ
Ἰὼ ξένοι,
τίνες ποτ’ ἐς γῆν τήνδε ναυτίλῳ πλάτῃ
κατέσχετ’ οὔτ’ εὔορμον οὔτ’ οἰκουμένην;
Ποίας πάτρας ἂν ἢ γένους ὑμᾶς ποτε
τύχοιμ’ ἂν εἰπών; Σχῆμα μὲν γὰρ Ἑλλάδος
στολῆς ὑπάρχει προσφιλεστάτης ἐμοί·
φωνῆς δ’ ἀκοῦσαι βούλομαι· καὶ μή μ’ ὄκνῳ
δείσαντες ἐκπλαγῆτ’ ἀπηγριωμένον,
ἀλλ’ οἰκτίσαντες ἄνδρα δύστηνον, μόνον,
ἔρημον ὧδε κἄφιλον, καλούμενον
φωνήσατ’, εἴπερ ὡς φίλοι προσήκετε.
Ἀλλ’ ἀνταμείψασθ’· οὐ γὰρ εἰκὸς οὔτ’ ἐμὲ
ὑμῶν ἁμαρτεῖν τοῦτό γ’ οὔθ’ ὑμᾶς ἐμοῦ.

ΝΕ. Ἀλλ’, ὦ ξέν’, ἴσθι τοῦτο πρῶτον, οὕνεκα
Ἕλληνές ἐσμεν· τοῦτο γὰρ βούλει μαθεῖν.

ΦΙ. Ὦ φίλτατον φώνημα· φεῦ τὸ καὶ λαβεῖν
πρόσφθεγμα τοιοῦδ’ ἀνδρὸς ἐν χρόνῳ μακρῷ.
Τίς σ’, ὦ τέκνον, προσέσχε, τίς προσήγαγεν
χρεία; τίς ὁρμή; τίς ἀνέμων ὁ φίλτατος;
Γέγωνέ μοι πᾶν τοῦθ’, ὅπως εἰδῶ τίς εἶ.

ΝΕ. Ἐγὼ γένος μέν εἰμι τῆς περιρρύτου

Σκύρου· πλέω δ’ ἐς οἶκον· αὐδῶμαι δὲ παῖς
Ἀχιλλέως, Νεοπτόλεμος· οἶσθ’ ἤδη τὸ πᾶν.

ΦΙ. Ὦ φιλτάτου παῖ πατρός, ὦ φίλης χθονός,
ὦ τοῦ γέροντος θρέμμα Λυκομήδους, τίνι
στόλῳ προσέσχες τήνδε γῆν, πόθεν πλέων;

ΝΕ. Ἐξ Ἰλίου τοι δὴ τανῦν γε ναυστολῶ.

ΦΙ. Πῶς εἶπας; Οὐ γὰρ δὴ σύ γ’ ἦσθα ναυβάτης
ἡμῖν κατ’ ἀρχὴν τοῦ πρὸς Ἴλιον στόλου.

ΝΕ. Ἦ γὰρ μετέσχες καὶ σὺ τοῦδε τοῦ πόνου;

ΦΙ. Ὦ τέκνον, οὐ γὰρ οἶσθά μ’ ὄντιν’ εἰσορᾷς;

ΝΕ. Πῶς γὰρ κάτοιδ’ ὅν γ’ εἶδον οὐδεπώποτε;

ΦΙ. Οὐδ’ οὔνομ’ οὐδὲ τῶν ἐμῶν κακῶν κλέος
ᾔσθου ποτ’ οὐδέν, οἷς ἐγὼ διωλλύμην;

ΝΕ. Ὡς μηδὲν εἰδότ’ ἴσθι μ’ ὧν ἀνιστορεῖς.

ΦΙ. Ὦ πόλλ’ ἐγὼ μοχθηρός, ὦ πικρὸς θεοῖς,

οὗ μηδὲ κληδὼν ὧδ’ ἔχοντος οἴκαδε
μηδ’ Ἑλλάδος γῆς μηδαμοῦ διῆλθέ που,
ἀλλ’ οἱ μὲν ἐκβαλόντες ἀνοσίως ἐμὲ
γελῶσι σῖγ’ ἔχοντες, ἡ δ’ ἐμὴ νόσος
ἀεὶ τέθηλε κἀπὶ μεῖζον ἔρχεται.
Ὦ τέκνον, ὦ παῖ πατρὸς ἐξ Ἀχιλλέως,
ὅδ’ εἶμ’ ἐγώ σοι κεῖνος, ὃν κλύεις ἴσως
τῶν Ἡρακλείων ὄντα δεσπότην ὅπλων,
ὁ τοῦ Ποίαντος παῖς Φιλοκτήτης, ὃν οἱ
δισσοὶ στρατηγοὶ χὠ Κεφαλλήνων ἄναξ
ἔρριψαν αἰσχρῶς ὧδ’ ἔρημον, ἀγρίᾳ
νόσῳ καταφθίνοντα, τῇδ’, ἀνδροφθόρου
πληγέντ’ ἐχίδνης ἀγρίῳ χαράγματι,
ξὺν ᾗ μ’ ἐκεῖνοι, παῖ, προθέντες ἐνθάδε
ᾤχοντ’ ἔρημον, ἡνίκ’ ἐκ τῆς ποντίας
Χρύσης κατέσχον δεῦρο ναυβάτῃ στόλῳ.
Τότ’ ἄσμενοί μ’ ὡς εἶδον ἐκ πολλοῦ σάλου
εὕδοντ’ ἐπ’ ἀκτῆς ἐν κατηρεφεῖ πέτρῳ,
ῥάκη προθέντες βαιὰ καί τι καὶ βορᾶς
λιπόντες ᾤχονθ’, οἷα φωτὶ δυσμόρῳ
ἐπωφέλημα σμικρόν· οἳ’ αὐτοῖς τύχοι.
Σὺ δή, τέκνον, ποίαν μ’ ἀνάστασιν δοκεῖς
αὐτῶν βεβώτων ἐξ ὕπνου στῆναι τότε;
ποῖ’ ἐκδακρῦσαι, ποῖ’ ἀποιμῶξαι κακά;
ὁρῶντα μὲν ναῦς ἃς ἔχων ἐναυστόλουν
πάσας βεβώσας, ἄνδρα δ’ οὐδέν’ ἔντοπον,
οὐχ ὅστις ἀρκέσειεν, οὐδ’ ὅστις νόσου
κάμνοντι συλλάβοιτο, πάντα δὲ σκοπῶν
ηὕρισκον οὐδὲν πλὴν ἀνιᾶσθαι παρόν,
τούτου δὲ πολλὴν εὐμάρειαν, ὦ τέκνον.
Ὁ μὲν χρόνος δὴ διὰ χρόνου προὔβαινέ μοι,
κἄδει τι βαιᾷ τῇδ’ ὑπὸ στέγῃ μόνον
διακονεῖσθαι· γαστρὶ μὲν τὰ σύμφορα
τόξον τόδ’ ἐξηύρισκε, τὰς ὑποπτέρους
βάλλον πελείας· πρὸς δὲ τοῦθ’ ὅ μοι βάλοι
νευροσπαδὴς ἄτρακτος, αὐτὸς ἂν τάλας
εἰλυόμην, δύστηνον ἐξέλκων πόδα,
πρὸς τοῦτ’ ἄν· εἴ τ’ ἔδει τι καὶ ποτὸν λαβεῖν,

καί που πάγου χυθέντος, οἷα χείματι,
ξύλον τι θραῦσαι, ταῦτ’ ἂν ἐξέρπων τάλας
ἐμηχανώμην· εἶτα πῦρ ἂν οὐ παρῆν,
ἀλλ’ ἐν πέτροισι πέτρον ἐκτρίβων, μόλις
ἔφην’ ἄφαντον φῶς, ὃ καὶ σῴζει μ’ ἀεί.
Οἰκουμένη γὰρ οὖν στέγη πυρὸς μέτα
πάντ’ ἐκπορίζει πλὴν τὸ μὴ νοσεῖν ἐμέ.
Φέρ’, ὦ τέκνον, νῦν καὶ τὸ τῆς νήσου μάθῃς.
Ταύτῃ πελάζει ναυβάτης οὐδεὶς ἑκών·
οὐ γάρ τις ὅρμος ἔστιν, οὐδ’ ὅποι πλέων
ἐξεμπολήσει κέρδος ἢ ξενώσεται.
Οὐκ ἐνθάδ’ οἱ πλοῖ τοῖσι σώφροσιν βροτῶν.
Τάχ’ οὖν τις ἄκων ἔσχε· πολλὰ γὰρ τάδε
ἐν τῷ μακρῷ γένοιτ’ ἂν ἀνθρώπων χρόνῳ.
Οὗτοί μ’, ὅταν μόλωσιν, ὦ τέκνον, λόγοις
ἐλεοῦσι μέν, καί πού τι καὶ βορᾶς μέρος
προσέδοσαν οἰκτίραντες, ἤ τινα στολήν·
ἐκεῖνο δ’ οὐδείς, ἡνίκ’ ἂν μνησθῶ, θέλει,
σῶσαί μ’ ἐς οἴκους, ἀλλ’ ἀπόλλυμαι τάλας
ἔτος τόδ’ ἤδη δέκατον ἐν λιμῷ τε καὶ
κακοῖσι βόσκων τὴν ἀδηφάγον νόσον.
Τοιαῦτ’ Ἀτρεῖδαί μ’ ἥ τ’ Ὀδυσσέως βία,
ὦ παῖ, δεδράκασ’, οἷ’ Ὀλύμπιοι θεοὶ
δοῖέν ποτ’ αὐτοῖς ἀντίποιν’ ἐμοῦ παθεῖν.

ΧΟ. Ἔοικα κἀγὼ τοῖς ἀφιγμένοις ἴσα
ξένοις ἐποικτίρειν σε, Ποίαντος τέκνον.

ΝΕ. Ἐγὼ δὲ καὐτὸς τοῖσδε μάρτυς ἐν λόγοις,
ὡς εἴσ’ ἀληθεῖς οἶδα, συντυχὼν κακῶν
ἀνδρῶν Ἀτρειδῶν τῆς τ’ Ὀδυσσέως βίας.

ΦΙ. Ἦ γάρ τι καὶ σὺ τοῖς πανωλέθροις ἔχεις
ἔγκλημ’ Ἀτρείδαις, ὥστε θυμοῦσθαι παθών;

ΝΕ. Θυμὸν γένοιτο χειρὶ πληρῶσαί ποτε,
325 ἵν’ αἱ Μυκῆναι γνοῖεν ἡ Σπάρτη θ’ ὅτι
χἡ Σκῦρος ἀνδρῶν ἀλκίμων μήτηρ ἔφυ.

ΦΙ. Εὖ γ’, ὦ τέκνον· τίνος γὰρ ὧδε τὸν μέγαν
χόλον κατ’ αὐτῶν ἐγκαλῶν ἐλήλυθας;

ΝΕ. Ὦ παῖ Ποίαντος, ἐξερῶ, μόλις δ’ ἐρῶ,
330 ἄγωγ’ ὑπ’ αὐτῶν ἐξελωβήθην μολών.
Ἐπεὶ γὰρ ἔσχε μοῖρ’ Ἀχιλλέα θανεῖν -

ΦΙ. Οἴμοι· φράσῃς μοι μὴ πέρα, πρὶν ἂν μάθω
πρῶτον τόδ’· ἦ τέθνηχ’ ὁ Πηλέως γόνος;

ΝΕ. Τέθνηκεν, ἀνδρὸς οὐδενός, θεοῦ δ’ ὕπο,
335 τοξευτός, ὡς λέγουσιν, ἐκ Φοίβου δαμείς.

ΦΙ. Ἀλλ’ εὐγενὴς μὲν ὁ κτανών τε χὠ θανών.
Ἀμηχανῶ δὲ πότερον, ὦ τέκνον, τὸ σὸν
πάθημ’ ἐλέγχω πρῶτον, ἢ κεῖνον στένω.

ΝΕ. Οἶμαι μὲν ἀρκεῖν σοί γε καὶ τὰ σ’, ὦ τάλας,
ἀλγήμαθ’, ὥστε μὴ τὰ τῶν πέλας στένειν.

ΦΙ. Ὀρθῶς ἔλεξας· τοιγαροῦν τὸ σὸν φράσον
αὖθις πάλιν μοι πρᾶγμ’ ὅτῳ σ’ ἐνύβρισαν.

ΝΕ. Ἦλθόν με νηὶ ποικιλοστόλῳ μέτα
δῖός τ’ Ὀδυσσεὺς χὠ τροφεὺς τοὐμοῦ πατρός,
λέγοντες, εἴτ’ ἀληθὲς εἴτ’ ἄρ’ οὖν μάτην,
ὡς οὐ θέμις γίγνοιτ’, ἐπεὶ κατέφθιτο
πατὴρ ἐμός, τὰ πέργαμ’ ἄλλον ἢ ‘μ’ ἐλεῖν.
Ταῦτ’, ὦ ξέν’, οὕτως ἐννέποντες οὐ πολὺν
χρόνον μ’ ἐπέσχον μή με ναυστολεῖν ταχύ,
μάλιστα μὲν δὴ τοῦ θανόντος ἱμέρῳ,
ὅπως ἴδοιμ’ ἄθαπτον· οὐ γὰρ εἰδόμην·
ἔπειτα μέντοι χὠ λόγος καλὸς προσῆν,
εἰ τἀπὶ Τροίᾳ πέργαμ’ αἱρήσοιμ’ ἰών.
Ἦν δ’ ἦμαρ ἤδη δεύτερον πλέοντί μοι,
κἀγὼ πικρὸν Σίγειον οὐρίῳ πλάτῃ
κατηγόμην· καί μ’ εὐθὺς ἐν κύκλῳ στρατὸς
ἐκβάντα πᾶς ἠσπάζετ’, ὀμνύντες βλέπειν
τὸν οὐκέτ’ ὄντα ζῶντ’ Ἀχιλλέα πάλιν.
Κεῖνος μὲν οὖν ἔκειτ’· ἐγὼ δ’ ὁ δύσμορος,
ἐπεὶ ‘δάκρυσα κεῖνον, οὐ μακρῷ χρόνῳ
ἐλθὼν Ἀτρείδας προσφιλῶς, ὡς εἰκὸς ἦν,
τά θ’ ὅπλ’ ἀπῄτουν τοῦ πατρὸς τά τ’ ἄλλ’ ὅσ’ ἦν.
Οἱ δ’ εἶπον, οἴμοι, τλημονέστατον λόγον·
“Ὦ σπέρμ’ Ἀχιλλέως, τἄλλα μὲν πάρεστί σοι
πατρῷ’ ἑλέσθαι, τῶν δ’ ὅπλων κείνων ἀνὴρ
ἄλλος κρατύνει νῦν, ὁ Λαέρτου γόνος.”
Κἀγὼ δακρύσας εὐθὺς ἐξανίσταμαι
ὀργῇ βαρείᾳ, καὶ καταλγήσας λέγω·
“Ὦ σχέτλι’, ἦ ‘τολμήσατ’ ἀντ’ ἐμοῦ τινι

δοῦναι τὰ τεύχη τἀμά, πρὶν μαθεῖν ἐμοῦ;”
Ὁ δ’ εἶπ’ Ὀδυσσεύς, πλησίον γὰρ ὢν κυρεῖ·
“Ναί, παῖ, δεδώκασ’ ἐνδίκως οὗτοι τάδε·
ἐγὼ γὰρ αὖτ’ ἔσωσα κἀκεῖνον παρών.”
Κἀγὼ χολωθεὶς εὐθὺς ἧρασσον κακοῖς
τοῖς πᾶσιν, οὐδὲν ἐνδεὲς ποιούμενος,
εἰ τἀμὰ κεῖνος ὅπλ’ ἀφαιρήσοιτό με.
Ὁ δ’ ἐνθάδ’ ἥκων, καίπερ οὐ δύσοργος ὤν,
δηχθεὶς πρὸς ἀξήκουσεν ὧδ’ ἠμείψατο·
“Οὐκ ἦσθ’ ἵν’ ἡμεῖς, ἀλλ’ ἀπῆσθ’ ἵν’ οὔ σ’ ἔδει,
καὶ ταῦτ’, ἐπειδὴ καὶ λέγεις θρασυστομῶν,
οὐ μή ποτ’ ἐς τὴν Σκῦρον ἐκπλεύσῃς ἔχων.”
Τοιαῦτ’ ἀκούσας κἀξονειδισθεὶς κακὰ
πλέω πρὸς οἴκους, τῶν ἐμῶν τητώμενος
πρὸς τοῦ κακίστου κἀκ κακῶν Ὀδυσσέως.
Κοὐκ αἰτιῶμαι κεῖνον ὡς τοὺς ἐν τέλει·
πόλις γὰρ ἔστι πᾶσα τῶν ἡγουμένων
στρατός τε σύμπας, οἱ δ’ ἀκοσμοῦντες βροτῶν
διδασκάλων λόγοισι γίγνονται κακοί.
Λόγος λέλεκται πᾶς· ὁ δ’ Ἀτρείδας στυγῶν
ἐμοί θ’ ὁμοίως καὶ θεοῖς εἴη φίλος.

ΧΟ. Ὀρεστέρα παμβῶτι Γᾶ, Str.
μᾶτερ αὐτοῦ Διός,
ἃ τὸν μέγαν Πακτωλὸν εὔχρυσον νέμεις,
σὲ κἀκεῖ, μᾶτερ πότνι’, ἐπηυδώμαν,
ὅτ’ ἐς τόνδ’ Ἀτρειδᾶν
ὕβρις πᾶσ’ ἐχώρει,
ὅτε τὰ πάτρια τεύχεα παρεδίδοσαν,
ἰὼ μάκαιρα ταυροκτόνων
λεόντων ἔφεδρε, τῷ Λαρτίου,
σέβας ὑπέρτατον.

ΦΙ. Ἔχοντες, ὡς ἔοικε, σύμβολον σαφὲς

λύπης πρὸς ἡμᾶς, ὦ ξένοι, πεπλεύκατε,
καί μοι προσᾴδεθ’ ὥστε γιγνώσκειν ὅτι
ταῦτ’ ἐξ Ἀτρειδῶν ἔργα κἀξ Ὀδυσσέως.
Ἔξοιδα γάρ νιν παντὸς ἂν λόγου κακοῦ
γλώσσῃ θιγόντα καὶ πανουργίας ἀφ’ ἧς
μηδὲν δίκαιον ἐς τέλος μέλλοι ποεῖν.
Ἀλλ’ οὔ τι τοῦτο θαῦμ’ ἔμοιγ’, ἀλλ’ εἰ παρὼν
Αἴας ὁ μείζων ταῦθ’ ὁρῶν ἠνείχετο.

ΝΕ. Οὐκ ἦν ἔτι ζῶν, ὦ ξέν’· οὐ γὰρ ἄν ποτε
ζῶντός γ’ ἐκείνου ταῦτ’ ἐσυλήθην ἐγώ.

ΦΙ. Πῶς εἶπας; ἀλλ’ ἦ χοὗτος οἴχεται θανών;
ΝΕ. Ὡς μηκέτ’ ὄντα κεῖνον ἐν φάει νόει.

ΦΙ. Οἴμοι τάλας. Ἀλλ’ οὐχ ὁ Τυδέως γόνος,
οὐδ’ οὐμπολητὸς Σισύφου Λαερτίῳ,
οὐ μὴ θάνωσι· τούσδε γὰρ μὴ ζῆν ἔδει.

ΝΕ. Οὐ δῆτ’, ἐπίστω τοῦτό γ’, ἀλλὰ καὶ μέγα
θάλλοντές εἰσι νῦν ἐν Ἀργείων στρατῷ.

ΦΙ. Τί δ’; ὃς παλαιὸς κἀγαθὸς φίλος τ’ ἐμός,
Νέστωρ ὁ Πύλιος ἔστιν; οὗτος γὰρ τά γε
κείνων κάκ’ ἐξήρυκε, βουλεύων σοφά.

ΝΕ. Κεῖνός γε πράσσει νῦν κακῶς, ἐπεὶ θανὼν
Ἀντίλοχος αὐτῷ φροῦδος, ὅσπερ ἦν γόνος.

ΦΙ. Οἴμοι, δύ’ αὖ τώδ’ ἄνδρ’ ἔλεξας οἷν ἐγὼ
ἥκιστ’ ἂν ἠθέλησ’ ὀλωλότοιν κλύειν.
Φεῦ φεῦ· τί δῆτα δεῖ σκοπεῖν, ὅθ’ οἵδε μὲν
τεθνᾶσ’, Ὀδυσσεὺς δ’ ἔστιν αὖ κἀνταῦθ’ ἵνα
χρῆν ἀντὶ τούτων αὐτὸν αὐδᾶσθαι νεκρόν;

ΝΕ. Σοφὸς παλαιστὴς κεῖνος, ἀλλὰ χαὶ σοφαὶ
γνῶμαι, Φιλοκτῆτ’, ἐμποδίζονται θαμά.

ΦΙ. Φέρ’ εἰπὲ πρὸς θεῶν, ποῦ γὰρ ἦν ἐνταῦθά σοι
Πάτροκλος, ὃς σοῦ πατρὸς ἦν τὰ φίλτατα;
ΝΕ. Χοὗτος τεθνηκὼς ἦν· λόγῳ δέ σ’ ἐν βραχεῖ
τοῦτ’ ἐκδιδάξω· πόλεμος οὐδέν’ ἄνδρ’ ἑκὼν
αἱρεῖ πονηρόν, ἀλλὰ τοὺς χρηστοὺς ἀεί.

ΦΙ. Ξυμμαρτυρῶ σοι· καὶ κατ’ αὐτὸ τοῦτό γε
ἀναξίου μὲν φωτὸς ἐξερήσομαι,
γλώσσῃ δὲ δεινοῦ καὶ σοφοῦ, τί νῦν κυρεῖ.

ΝΕ. Ποίου δὲ τούτου πλήν γ’ Ὀδυσσέως ἐρεῖς;

ΦΙ. Οὐ τοῦτον εἶπον, ἀλλὰ Θερσίτης τις ἦν,
ὃς οὐκ ἂν εἵλετ’ εἰσάπαξ εἰπεῖν ὅπου
μηδεὶς ἐῴη· τοῦτον οἶσθ’ εἰ ζῶν κυρεῖ;
445 ΝΕ. Οὐκ εἶδον αὐτόν, ᾐσθόμην δ’ ἔτ’ ὄντα νιν.

ΦΙ. Ἔμελλ’· ἐπεὶ οὐδέν πω κακόν γ’ ἀπώλετο,
ἀλλ’ εὖ περιστέλλουσιν αὐτὰ δαίμονες·
καί πως τὰ μὲν πανοῦργα καὶ παλιντριβῆ
χαίρουσ’ ἀναστρέφοντες ἐξ Ἅιδου, τὰ δὲ
450 δίκαια καὶ τὰ χρήστ’ ἀποστέλλουσ’ ἀεί.
Ποῦ χρὴ τίθεσθαι ταῦτα, ποῦ δ’ αἰνεῖν, ὅταν
τὰ θεῖ’ ἐπαινῶν τοὺς θεοὺς εὕρω κακούς;

ΝΕ. Ἐγὼ μέν, ὦ γένεθλον Οἰταίου πατρός,
τὸ λοιπὸν ἤδη τηλόθεν τό τ’ Ἴλιον
455 καὶ τοὺς Ἀτρείδας εἰσορῶν φυλάξομαι·
ὅπου θ’ ὁ χείρων τἀγαθοῦ μεῖζον σθένει
κἀποφθίνει τὰ χρηστὰ χὠ δειλὸς κρατεῖ,
τούτους ἐγὼ τοὺς ἄνδρας οὐ στέρξω ποτέ·
ἀλλ’ ἡ πετραία Σκῦρος ἐξαρκοῦσά μοι
460 ἔσται τὸ λοιπόν, ὥστε τέρπεσθαι δόμῳ.
Νῦν δ’ εἶμι πρὸς ναῦν· καὶ σύ, Ποίαντος τέκνον,
χαῖρ’ ὡς μέγιστα, χαῖρε· καί σε δαίμονες
νόσου μεταστήσειαν ὡς αὐτὸς θέλεις.
Ἡμεῖς δ’ ἴωμεν, ὡς ὀπηνίκ’ ἂν θεὸς
465 πλοῦν ἡμὶν εἴκῃ, τηνικαῦθ’ ὁρμώμεθα.

ΦΙ. Ἤδη, τέκνον, στέλλεσθε;

ΝΕ. Καιρὸς γὰρ καλεῖ
πλοῦν μὴ ‘ξ ἀπόπτου μᾶλλον ἢ ‘γγύθεν σκοπεῖν.

ΦΙ. Πρός νύν σε πατρός, πρός τε μητρός, ὦ τέκνον,
πρός τ’ εἴ τί σοι κατ’ οἶκόν ἐστι προσφιλές,
470 ἱκέτης ἱκνοῦμαι, μὴ λίπῃς μ’ οὕτω μόνον,
ἔρημον ἐν κακοῖσι τοῖσδ’ οἵοις ὁρᾷς
ὅσοισί τ’ ἐξήκουσας ἐνναίοντά με·
ἀλλ’ ἐν παρέργῳ θοῦ με. Δυσχέρεια μέν,
ἔξοιδα, πολλὴ τοῦδε τοῦ φορήματος·
475 ὅμως δὲ τλῆθι· τοῖσι γενναίοισί τοι
τό τ’ αἰσχρὸν ἐχθρὸν καὶ τὸ χρηστὸν εὐκλεές.
Σοὶ δ’, ἐκλιπόντι τοῦτ’, ὄνειδος οὐ καλόν,
δράσαντι δ’, ὦ παῖ, πλεῖστον εὐκλείας γέρας,
ἐὰν μόλω ‘γὼ ζῶν πρὸς Οἰταίαν χθόνα.
480 Ἴθ’, ἡμέρας τοι μόχθος οὐχ ὅλης μιᾶς,
τόλμησον, ἐμβαλοῦ μ’ ὅπῃ θέλεις ἄγων,
εἰς ἀντλίαν, εἰς πρῷραν, εἰς πρύμνην, ὅποι
ἥκιστα μέλλω τοὺς ξυνόντας ἀλγυνεῖν.
Νεῦσον, πρὸς αὐτοῦ Ζηνὸς Ἱκεσίου, τέκνον,
485 πείσθητι· προσπίτνω σε γόνασι, καίπερ ὢν
ἀκράτωρ ὁ τλήμων, χωλός. Ἀλλὰ μή μ’ ἀφῇς
ἔρημον οὕτω χωρὶς ἀνθρώπων στίβου,
ἀλλ’ ἢ πρὸς οἶκον τὸν σὸν ἔκσωσόν μ’ ἄγων,
ἢ πρὸς τὰ Χαλκώδοντος Εὐβοίας σταθμά·
490 κἀκεῖθεν οὔ μοι μακρὸς εἰς Οἴτην στόλος
Τραχινίαν τε δειράδ’ ἢ τὸν εὔροον
Σπερχειὸν ἔσται· πατρί μ’ ὡς δείξῃς φίλῳ,
ὃν δὴ παλαιὸν ἐξότου δέδοικ’ ἐγὼ
μή μοι βεβήκῃ. Πολλὰ γὰρ τοῖς ἰγμένοις
495 ἔστελλον αὐτὸν ἱκεσίους πέμπων λιτάς,
αὐτόστολον πέμψαντά μ’ ἐκσῶσαι δόμους.
Ἀλλ’ ἢ τέθνηκεν ἢ τὰ τῶν διακόνων,
ὡς εἰκός, οἶμαι, τοὐμὸν ἐν σμικρῷ μέρος
ποιούμενοι τὸν οἴκαδ’ ἧπειγον στόλον.
500 Νῦν δ’, εἰς σὲ γὰρ πομπόν τε καὐτὸν ἄγγελον

ἥκω, σὺ σῶσον, σύ μ’ ἐλέησον, εἰσορῶν
ὡς πάντα δεινὰ κἀπικινδύνως βροτοῖς
κεῖται παθεῖν μὲν εὖ, παθεῖν δὲ θἄτερα.
Χρὴ δ’ ἐκτὸς ὄντα πημάτων τὰ δείν’ ὁρᾶν,
505 χὤταν τις εὖ ζῇ, τηνικαῦτα τὸν βίον
σκοπεῖν μάλιστα μὴ διαφθαρεὶς λάθῃ.

ΧΟ. Οἴκτιρ’, ἄναξ· πολλῶν ἔλε- Ant.
ξεν δυσοίστων πόνων
ἆθλ’, ὅσσα μηδεὶς τῶν ἐμῶν τύχοι φίλων.
510 Εἰ δὲ πικρούς, ἄναξ, Ἀτρείδας ἔχθεις,
ἐγὼ μέν, τὸ κείνων
κακὸν τῷδε κέρδος
515 μετατιθέμενος, ἔνθαπερ ἐπιμέμονεν,
ἐπ’ εὐστόλου ταχείας νεὼς
πορεύσαιμ’ ἂν ἐς δόμους, τὰν ἐκ θεῶν
νέμεσιν ἐκφυγών.

ΝΕ. Ὅρα σὺ μὴ νῦν μέν τις εὐχερὴς παρῇς,
520 ὅταν δὲ πλησθῇς τῆς νόσου ξυνουσίᾳ,
τότ’ οὐκέθ’ αὐτὸς τοῖς λόγοις τούτοις φανῇς.

ΧΟ. Ἥκιστα· τοῦτ’ οὐκ ἔσθ’ ὅπως ποτ’ εἰς ἐμὲ
τοὔνειδος ἔξεις ἐνδίκως ὀνειδίσαι.

ΝΕ. Ἀλλ’ αἰσχρὰ μέντοι σοῦ γέ μ’ ἐνδεέστερον
525 ξένῳ φανῆναι πρὸς τὸ καίριον πονεῖν.
Ἀλλ’ εἰ δοκεῖ, πλέωμεν, ὁρμάσθω ταχύς,
χἡ ναῦς γὰρ ἄξει κοὐκ ἀπαρνηθήσεται.

Μόνον θεοὶ σῴζοιεν ἔκ τε τῆσδε γῆς
ἡμᾶς ὅποι τ’ ἐνθένδε βουλοίμεσθα πλεῖν.
ΦΙ. Ὦ φίλτατον μὲν ἦμαρ, ἥδιστος δ’ ἀνήρ,
φίλοι δὲ ναῦται, πῶς ἂν ὑμῖν ἐμφανὴς
ἔργῳ γενοίμην ὥς μ’ ἔθεσθε προσφιλῆ;
Ἴωμεν, ὦ παῖ, προσκύσαντε τὴν ἔσω
ἄοικον εἰσοίκησιν, ὥς με καὶ μάθῃς
ἀφ’ ὧν διέζων ὥς τ’ ἔφυν εὐκάρδιος.
Οἶμαι γὰρ οὐδ’ ἂν ὄμμασιν μόνην θέαν
ἄλλον λαβόντα πλὴν ἐμοῦ τλῆναι τάδε·
ἐγὼ δ’ ἀνάγκῃ προὔμαθον στέργειν κακά.

ΧΟ. Ἐπίσχετον, μάθωμεν· ἄνδρε γὰρ δύο,
ὁ μὲν νεὼς σῆς ναυβάτης, ὁ δ’ ἀλλόθρους,
χωρεῖτον, ὧν μαθόντες αὖθις εἴσιτον.

ΕΜΠΟΡΟΣ
Ἀχιλλέως παῖ, τόνδε τὸν ξυνέμπορον,
ὃς ἦν νεὼς σῆς σὺν δυοῖν ἄλλοιν φύλαξ,
ἐκέλευσ’ ἐμοί σε ποῦ κυρῶν εἴης φράσαι,
ἐπείπερ ἀντέκυρσα, δοξάζων μὲν οὔ,
τύχῃ δέ πως πρὸς ταὐτὸν ὁρμισθεὶς πέδον.
Πλέων γάρ, ὡς ναύκληρος, οὐ πολλῷ στόλῳ
ἀπ’ Ἰλίου πρὸς οἶκον ἐς τὴν εὔβοτρυν
Πεπάρηθον, ὡς ἤκουσα τοὺς ναύτας ὅτι
σοὶ πάντες εἶεν συννεναυστοληκότες,
ἔδοξέ μοι μὴ σῖγα, πρὶν φράσαιμί σοι,
τὸν πλοῦν ποεῖσθαι προστυχόντι τῶν ἴσων.
Οὐδὲν σύ που κάτοισθα τῶν σαυτοῦ πέρι,
ἃ τοῖσιν Ἀργείοισιν ἀμφὶ σοῦ νέα
βουλεύματ’ ἐστί, κοὐ μόνον βουλεύματα,
ἀλλ’ ἔργα δρώμεν’, οὐκέτ’ ἐξαργούμενα.

ΝΕ. Ἀλλ’ ἡ χάρις μὲν τῆς προμηθίας, ξένε,
εἰ μὴ κακὸς πέφυκα, προσφιλὴς μενεῖ·
φράσον δ’ ἅπερ γ’ ἔλεξας, ὡς μάθω τί μοι
560 νεώτερον βούλευμ’ ἀπ’ Ἀργείων ἔχεις.

ΕΜ. Φροῦδοι διώκοντές σε ναυτικῷ στόλῳ
Φοῖνιξ ὁ πρέσβυς οἵ τε Θησέως κόροι.

ΝΕ. Ὡς ἐκ βίας μ’ ἄξοντες ἢ λόγοις πάλιν;

ΕΜ. Οὐκ οἶδ’· ἀκούσας δ’ ἄγγελος πάρειμί σοι.
565 ΝΕ. Ἦ ταῦτα δὴ Φοῖνίξ τε χοἰ ξυνναυβάται
οὕτω καθ’ ὁρμὴν δρῶσιν Ἀτρειδῶν χάριν;

ΕΜ. Ὡς ταῦτ’ ἐπίστω δρώμεν’ οὐ μέλλοντ’ ἔτι.

ΝΕ. Πῶς οὖν Ὀδυσσεὺς πρὸς τάδ’ οὐκ αὐτάγγελος
πλεῖν ἦν ἕτοιμος; ἢ φόβος τις εἶργέ νιν;
570 ΕΜ. Κεῖνός γ’ ἐπ’ ἄλλον ἄνδρ’ ὁ Τυδέως τε παῖς
ἔστελλον, ἡνίκ’ ἐξανηγόμην ἐγώ.

ΝΕ. Πρὸς ποῖον αὖ τόνδ’ αὐτὸς οὐδυσσεὺς ἔπλει;

ΕΜ. Ἦν δή τις - ἀλλὰ τόνδε μοι πρῶτον φράσον
τίς ἐστιν· ἂν λέγῃς δὲ μὴ φώνει μέγα.
575 ΝΕ. Ὅδ’ ἔσθ’ ὁ κλεινός σοι Φιλοκτήτης, ξένε.

ΕΜ. Μή νύν μ’ ἔρῃ τὰ πλείον’, ἀλλ’ ὅσον τάχος
ἔκπλει σεαυτὸν ξυλλαβὼν ἐκ τῆσδε γῆς.

ΦΙ. Τί φησιν, ὦ παῖ; τί με κατὰ σκότον ποτὲ
διεμπολᾷ λόγοισι πρός σ’ ὁ ναυβάτης;
580 ΝΕ. Οὐκ οἶδά πω τί φησι· δεῖ δ’ αὐτὸν λέγειν
εἰς φῶς ὃ λέξει, πρὸς σὲ κἀμὲ τούσδε τε.

ΕΜ. Ὦ σπέρμ’ Ἀχιλλέως, μή με διαβάλῃς στρατῷ
λέγονθ’ ἃ μὴ δεῖ· πόλλ’ ἐγὼ κείνων ὕπο
δρῶν ἀντιπάσχω χρηστά θ’, οἵ’ ἀνὴρ πένης.
585 ΝΕ. Ἐγώ εἰμ’ Ἀτρείδαις δυσμενής· οὗτος δέ μοι
φίλος μέγιστος, οὕνεκ’ Ἀτρείδας στυγεῖ.
Δεῖ δή σ’, ἔμοιγ’ ἐλθόντα προσφιλῆ, λόγων
κρύψαι πρὸς ἡμᾶς μηδέν’ ὧν ἀκήκοας.

ΕΜ. Ὅρα τί ποιεῖς, παῖ.

ΝΕ. Σκοπῶ κἀγὼ πάλαι.
590 ΕΜ. Σὲ θήσομαι τῶνδ’ αἴτιον.

ΝΕ. Ποιοῦ λέγων.

ΕΜ. Λέγω· ‘πὶ τοῦτον ἄνδρε τώδ’ ὥπερ κλύεις,
ὁ Τυδέως παῖς ἤ τ’ Ὀδυσσέως βία,
διώμοτοι πλέουσιν ἦ μὴν ἢ λόγῳ
πείσαντες ἄξειν, ἢ πρὸς ἰσχύος κράτος.
595 Καὶ ταῦτ’ Ἀχαιοὶ πάντες ἤκουον σαφῶς
Ὀδυσσέως λέγοντος· οὗτος γὰρ πλέον
τὸ θάρσος εἶχε θἀτέρου δράσειν τάδε.

ΝΕ. Τίνος δ’ Ἀτρεῖδαι τοῦδ’ ἄγαν οὕτω χρόνῳ
τοσῷδ’ ἐπεστρέφοντο πράγματος χάριν,
600 ὅν γ’ εἶχον ἤδη χρόνιον ἐκβεβληκότες;
τίς ὁ πόθος αὐτοὺς ἵκετ’, ἢ θεῶν βία
καὶ νέμεσις, οἵπερ ἔργ’ ἀμύνουσιν κακά;

ΕΜ. Ἐγὼ σὲ τοῦτ’, ἴσως γὰρ οὐκ ἀκήκοας,
πᾶν ἐκδιδάξω. Μάντις ἦν τις εὐγενής,
605 Πριάμου μὲν υἱός, ὄνομα δ’ ὠνομάζετο
Ἕλενος, ὃν οὗτος νυκτὸς ἐξελθὼν μόνος,
ὁ πάντ’ ἀκούων αἰσχρὰ καὶ λωβήτ’ ἔπη
δόλιος Ὀδυσσεὺς εἶλε, δέσμιόν τ’ ἄγων
ἔδειξ’ Ἀχαιοῖς ἐς μέσον, θήραν καλήν·
610 ὃς δὴ τά τ’ ἄλλ’ αὐτοῖσι πάντ’ ἐθέσπισε,
καὶ τἀπὶ Τροίᾳ πέργαμ’ ὡς οὐ μή ποτε
πέρσοιεν, εἰ μὴ τόνδε πείσαντες λόγῳ
ἄγοιντο νήσου τῆσδ’ ἐφ’ ἧς ναίει τὰ νῦν.
Καὶ ταῦθ’ ὅπως ἤκουσ’ ὁ Λαέρτου τόκος
615 τὸν μάντιν εἰπόντ’, εὐθέως ὑπέσχετο
τὸν ἄνδρ’ Ἀχαιοῖς τόνδε δηλώσειν ἄγων·
οἴοιτο μὲν μάλισθ’ ἑκούσιον λαβών,

εἰ μὴ θέλοι δ’, ἄκοντα· καὶ τούτων κάρα
τέμνειν ἐφεῖτο τῷ θέλοντι μὴ τυχών.
620 Ἤκουσας, ὦ παῖ, πάντα· τὸ σπεύδειν δέ σοι
καὐτῷ παραινῶ κεἴ τινος κήδῃ πέρι.

ΦΙ. Οἴμοι τάλας· ἦ κεῖνος, ἡ πᾶσα βλάβη,
ἔμ’ εἰς Ἀχαιοὺς ὤμοσεν πείσας στελεῖν;
πεισθήσομαι γὰρ ὧδε κἀξ Ἅιδου θανὼν
625 πρὸς φῶς ἀνελθεῖν, ὥσπερ οὐκείνου πατήρ.

ΕΜ. Οὐκ οἶδ’ ἐγὼ ταῦτ’· ἀλλ’ ἐγὼ μὲν εἶμ’ ἐπὶ
ναῦν, σφῷν δ’ ὅπως ἄριστα συμφέροι θεός.

ΦΙ. Οὔκουν τάδ’, ὦ παῖ, δεινά, τὸν Λαερτίου
ἔμ’ ἐλπίσαι ποτ’ ἂν λόγοισι μαλθακοῖς
630 δεῖξαι νεὼς ἄγοντ’ ἐν Ἀργείοις μέσοις;
οὔ· θᾶσσον ἂν τῆς πλεῖστον ἐχθίστης ἐμοὶ
κλύοιμ’ ἐχίδνης, ἥ μ’ ἔθηκεν ὧδ’ ἄπουν.
Ἀλλ’ ἔστ’ ἐκείνῳ πάντα λεκτά, πάντα δὲ
τολμητά. Καὶ νῦν οἶδ’ ὀθούνεχ’ ἵξεται.
635 Ἀλλ’, ὦ τέκνον, χωρῶμεν, ὡς ἡμᾶς πολὺ
πέλαγος ὁρίζῃ τῆς Ὀδυσσέως νεώς·
Ἴωμεν· ἤ τοι καίριος σπουδή, πόνου
λήξαντος, ὕπνον κἀνάπαυλαν ἤγαγεν.

ΝΕ. Οὐκοῦν ἐπειδὰν πνεῦμα τοὐκ πρῴρας ἀνῇ.
640 τότε στελοῦμεν· νῦν γὰρ ἀντιοστατεῖ.

ΦΙ. Ἀεὶ καλὸς πλοῦς ἔσθ’, ὅταν φεύγῃς κακά.

ΝΕ. Οὔκ· ἀλλὰ κἀκείνοισι ταῦτ’ ἐναντία.

ΦΙ. Οὐκ ἔστι λῃσταῖς πνεῦμ’ ἐναντιούμενον,
ὅταν παρῇ κλέψαι τε χἀρπάσαι βίᾳ.
ΝΕ. Ἀλλ’, εἰ δοκεῖ, χωρῶμεν, ἔνδοθεν λαβὼν
ὅτου σε χρεία καὶ πόθος μάλιστ’ ἔχει.

ΦΙ. Ἀλλ’ ἔστιν ὧν δεῖ, καίπερ οὐ πολλῶν ἄπο.

ΝΕ. Τί τοῦθ’ ὃ μὴ νεώς γε τῆς ἐμῆς ἔπι;

ΦΙ. Φύλλον τί μοι πάρεστιν ᾧ μάλιστ’ ἀεὶ
κοιμῶ τόδ’ ἕλκος, ὥστε πραΰνειν πάνυ.

ΝΕ. Ἀλλ’ ἔκφερ’ αὐτό· τί γὰρ ἔτ’ ἄλλ’ ἐρᾷς λαβεῖν;

ΦΙ. Εἴ μοί τι τόξων τῶνδ’ ἀπημελημένον
παρερρύηκεν, ὡς λίπω μή τῳ λαβεῖν.

ΝΕ. Ἦ ταῦτα γὰρ τὰ κλεινὰ τόξ’ ἃ νῦν ἔχεις;
ΦΙ. Ταῦτ’ οὐ γὰρ ἄλλα γ’ ἔσθ’ ἃ βαστάζω χεροῖν.

ΝΕ. Ἆρ’ ἔστιν ὥστε κἀγγύθεν θέαν λαβεῖν,
καὶ βαστάσαι με προσκύσαι θ’ ὥσπερ θεόν;

ΦΙ. Σοί γ’, ὦ τέκνον, καὶ τοῦτο κἄλλο τῶν ἐμῶν
ὁποῖον ἄν σοι ξυμφέρῃ γενήσεται.
ΝΕ. Καὶ μὴν ἐρῶ γε· τὸν δ’ ἔρωθ’ οὕτως ἔχω·
εἴ μοι θέμις, θέλοιμ’ ἄν· εἰ δὲ μή, πάρες.

ΦΙ. Ὅσιά τε φωνεῖς ἔστι τ’, ὦ τέκνον, θέμις,
ὅς γ’ ἡλίου τόδ’ εἰσορᾶν ἐμοὶ φάος
μόνος δέδωκας, ὃς χθόν’ Οἰταίαν ἰδεῖν,
ὃς πατέρα πρέσβυν, ὃς φίλους, ὃς τῶν ἐμῶν
ἐχθρῶν μ’ ἔνερθεν ὄντ’ ἀνέστησας πέρα.
Θάρσει, παρέσται ταῦτά σοι καὶ θιγγάνειν
καὶ δόντι δοῦναι κἀξεπεύξασθαι βροτῶν
ἀρετῆς ἕκατι τῶνδ’ ἐπιψαῦσαι μόνον·
εὐεργετῶν γὰρ καὐτὸς αὖτ’ ἐκτησάμην.

ΝΕ. Οὐκ ἄχθομαί σ’ ἰδών τε καὶ λαβὼν φίλον·
ὅστις γὰρ εὖ δρᾶν εὖ παθὼν ἐπίσταται,
παντὸς γένοιτ’ ἂν κτήματος κρείσσων φίλος.
Χωροῖς ἂν εἴσω.

ΦΙ. Καὶ σέ γ’ εἰσάξω· τὸ γὰρ
νοσοῦν ποθεῖ σε ξυμπαραστάτην λαβεῖν.

ΧΟ. Λόγῳ μὲν ἐξήκουσ’, ὅπωπα δ’ οὐ μάλα, Str. 1 .
τὸν πελάταν λέκτρων ποτὲ ‹τῶν› Διὸς
κατ’ ἄμπυκα δὴ δρομάδα
δέσμιον ὡς ἔβαλεν παγκρατὴς Κρόνου παῖς·
ἄλλον δ’ οὔτιν’ ἔγωγ’ οἶδα κλύων οὐδ’ ἐσιδὼν μοίρᾳ
τοῦδ’ ἐχθίονι συντυχόντα θνατῶν,
ὃς οὔτ’ ἔρξας τιν’ οὔτε νοσφίσας,
ἀλλ’ ἴσος ἔν ‹γ’› ἴσοις ἀνὴρ
ὤλλυθ’ ὡδ’ ἀναξίως.
Τόδε ‹δ’ αὖ› θαῦμά μ’ ἔχει πῶς
ποτε πῶς ποτ’ ἀμφιπλήκτων
ῥοθίων μόνος κλύων, πῶς
ἄρα πανδάκρυτον οὕτω
βιοτὰν κατέσχεν·
ἴν’ αὐτὸς ἦν πρόσουρος, οὐκ ἔχων βάσιν, Ant. 1 .
οὐδέ τιν’ ἐγχώρων κακογείτονα,
παρ’ ᾧ στόνον ἀντίτυπον
‹τὸν› βαρυβρῶτ’ ἀποκλαύσειεν αἱματηρόν·
οὐδ’ ὃς [τὰν] θερμοτάταν αἱμάδα κηκιομέναν ἐλκέων
ἐνθήρου ποδὸς ἠπίοισι φύλλοις
κατευνάσειεν, εἴ τις ἐμπέσοι,
φορβάδος ἐκ γαίας ἐλών·
εἶρπε δ’ ἄλλοτ’ ἀλλ‹αχ›ᾷ
τότ’ ἂν εἰλυόμενος, παῖς
ἄτερ ὡς φίλας τιθήνας,
ὅθεν εὐμάρει’ ὑπάρχοι
πόρου, ἀνίκ’ ἐξανείη
δακέθυμος ἄτα·
οὐ φορβὰν ἱερᾶς γᾶς σπόρον, οὐκ ἄλλων Str. 2 .
αἴρων τῶν νεμόμεσθ’ ἀνέρες ἀλφησταί,
πλὴν ἐξ ὠκυβόλων εἴ ποτε τόξων πτα-
νοῖς ἰοῖς ἀνύσειε γαστρὶ φορβάν.
Ὦ μελέα ψυχά·

ὃς μηδ’ οἰνοχύτου πώματος ἥσθη δεκέτει χρόνῳ,
λεύσσων δ’ εἴ που γνοίη, στατὸν εἰς ὕδωρ
αἰεὶ προσενώμα.
Νῦν δ’ ἀνδρῶν ἀγαθῶν παιδὸς ὑπαντήσας Ant. 2 .
ευδαίμων ἀνύσει καὶ μέγας ἐκ κείνων·
ὅς νιν ποντοπόρῳ δούρατι, πλήθει πολ-
λῶν μηνῶν, πατρίαν ἄγει πρὸς αὐλὰν
Μαλιάδων νυμφᾶν
Σπερχειοῦ τε παρ’ ὄχθαις, ἵν’ ὁ χάλκασπις ἀνὴρ θεοῖς
πλάθει πᾶσιν, θείῳ πυρὶ παμφαής,
Οἴτας ὑπὲρ ὄχθων.
ΝΕ. Ἔρπ’, εἰ θέλεις. Τί δή ποθ’ ὧδ’ ἐξ οὐδενὸς
λόγου σιωπᾷς κἀπόπληκτος ὧδ’ ἔχῃ;

ΦΙ. Ἄ, ἆ, ἆ, ἆ.

ΝΕ. Τί ἔστιν;

ΦΙ. Οὐδὲν δεινόν· ἀλλ’ ἴθ’, ὦ τέκνον.

ΝΕ. Μῶν ἄλγος ἴσχεις τῆς παρεστώσης νόσου;
ΦΙ. Οὐ δῆτ’ ἔγωγ’, ἀλλ’ ἄρτι κουφίζειν δοκῶ.
Ἰὼ θεοί.

ΝΕ. Τί τοὺς θεοὺς οὕτως ἀναστένων καλεῖς;

ΦΙ. Σωτῆρας αὐτοὺς ἠπίους θ’ ἡμῖν μολεῖν.
Ἃ, ἃ, ἃ, ἃ.
740 ΝΕ. Τί ποτε πέπονθας; οὐκ ἐρεῖς, ἀλλ’ ὦδ’ ἔσῃ
σιγηλός; ἐν κακῷ δέ τῳ φαίνῃ κυρῶν.

ΦΙ. Ἀπόλωλα, τέκνον, κοὐ δυνήσομαι κακὸν
κρύψαι παρ’ ὑμῖν, ἀτταταῖ· διέρχεται,
διέρχεται. Δύστηνος, ὦ τάλας ἐγώ.
745 Ἀπόλωλα, τέκνον· βρύκομαι, τέκνον· παπαῖ,
ἀπαππαπαππαῖ, παππαπαππαπαππαπαῖ.
Πρὸς θεῶν, πρόχειρον εἴ τί σοι, τέκνον, πάρα
ξίφος χεροῖν, πάταξον εἰς ἄκρον πόδα·
ἀπάμησον ὡς τάχιστα· μὴ φείσῃ βίου·
750 Ἴθ’, ὦ παῖ.

ΝΕ. Τί δ’ ἔστιν οὕτω νεοχμὸν ἐξαίφνης, ὅτου
τοσήνδ’ ἰυγὴν καὶ στόνον σαυτοῦ ποιεῖς;

ΦΙ. Οἶσθ’, ὦ τέκνον.

ΝΕ. Τί δ’ ἔστιν;

ΦΙ. Οἶσθ’, ὦ παῖ.

ΝΕ. Τί σοι;
Οὐκ οἶδα.

ΦΙ. Πῶς οὐκ οἶσθα; παππαπαππαπαῖ.
755 ΝΕ. Δεινόν γε τοὐπίσαγμα τοῦ νοσήματος.

ΦΙ. Δεινὸν γὰρ οὐδὲ ῥητόν· ἀλλ’ οἴκτιρέ με.

ΝΕ. Τί δῆτα δράσω;

ΦΙ. Μή με ταρβήσας προδῷς·
ἥκει γὰρ αὕτη διὰ χρόνου, πλάνοις ἴσως
ὡς ἐξεπλήσθη.

ΝΕ. Ἰὼ ἰὼ δύστηνε σύ,
760 δύστηνε δῆτα διὰ πόνων πάντων φανείς.
Βούλει λάβωμαι δῆτα καὶ θίγω τί σου;

ΦΙ. Μὴ δῆτα τοῦτό γ’· ἀλλά μοι τὰ τόξ’ ἐλὼν
τάδ’, ὥσπερ ᾐτοῦ μ’ ἀρτίως, ἕως ἀνῇ
765 τὸ πῆμα τοῦτο τῆς νόσου τὸ νῦν παρόν,
σῷζ’ αὐτὰ καὶ φύλασσε· λαμβάνει γὰρ οὖν
ὕπνος μ’, ὅταν περ τὸ κακὸν ἐξίῃ τόδε·
κοὐκ ἔστι λῆξαι πρότερον· ἀλλ’ ἐᾶν χρεὼν
ἕκηλον εὕδειν. Ἢν δὲ τῷδε τῷ χρόνῳ

μόλωσ’ ἐκεῖνοι, πρὸς θεῶν, ἐφίεμαι
ἑκόντα μήτ’ ἄκοντα, μήτε τῳ τέχνῃ
κείνοις μεθεῖναι ταῦτα, μὴ σαυτόν θ’ ἅμα
κἄμ’ ὄντα σαυτοῦ πρόστροπον κτείνας γένῃ.

ΝΕ. Θάρσει προνοίας οὕνεκ’· οὐ δοθήσεται
πλὴν σοί τε κἀμοί· ξὺν τύχῃ δὲ πρόσφερε.

ΦΙ. Ἰδοὺ δέχου, παῖ· τὸν Φθόνον δὲ πρόσκυσον,
μή σοι γενέσθαι πολύπον’ αὐτά, μηδ’ ὅπως
ἐμοί τε καὶ τῷ πρόσθ’ ἐμοῦ κεκτημένῳ.

ΝΕ. Ὦ θεοί, γένοιτο ταῦτα νῷν· γένοιτο δὲ
πλοῦς οὔριός τε κεὐσταλὴς ὅποι ποτὲ
θεὸς δικαιοῖ χὠ στόλος πορσύνεται.

ΦΙ. Ἀλλὰ δέδοικ’, ὦ παῖ, μή μ’ ἀτελὴς εὐχῇ·
στάζει γὰρ αὖ μοι φοίνιον τόδ’ ἐκ βυθοῦ
κηκῖον αἷμα, καί τι προσδοκῶ νέον.
Παπαῖ, φεῦ·
παπαῖ μάλ’, ὦ πούς, οἷά μ’ ἐργάσῃ κακά.
Προσέρπει,
προσέρχεται τόδ’ ἐγγύς. Οἴμοι μοι τάλας.
Ἔχετε τὸ πρᾶγμα· μὴ φύγητε μηδαμῇ.
Ἀτταταῖ.
Ὦ ξένε Κεφαλλήν, εἴθε σοῦ διαμπερὲς
στέρνων ἔχοιτ’ ἄλγησις ἥδε. Φεῦ, παπαῖ,
παπαῖ μάλ’ αὖθις. Ὦ διπλοῖ στρατηλάται,
Ἀγάμεμνον, ὦ Μενέλαε, πῶς ἂν ἀντ’ ἐμοῦ

τὸν ἴσον χρόνον τρέφοιτε τήνδε τὴν νόσον;
Ὤμοι μοι.
Ὦ Θάνατε Θάνατε, πῶς ἀεὶ καλούμενος
οὔτω κατ᾽ ἦμαρ οὐ δύνᾳ μολεῖν ποτε;
Ὦ τέκνον, ὦ γενναῖον, ἀλλὰ συλλαβών,
τῷ Λημνίῳ τῷδ᾽ ἀνακαλουμένῳ πυρὶ
ἔμπρησον, ὦ γενναῖε· κἀγώ τοί ποτε
τὸν τοῦ Διὸς παῖδ᾽ ἀντὶ τῶνδε τῶν ὅπλων,
ἃ νῦν σὺ σῴζεις, τοῦτ᾽ ἐπηξίωσα δρᾶν.
Τί φῄς, παῖ;
Τί φῄς; Τί σιγᾷς; Ποῦ ποτ᾽ ὤν, τέκνον, κυρεῖς;

ΝΕ. Ἀλγῶ πάλαι δὴ τἀπὶ σοὶ στένων κακά.

ΦΙ. Ἀλλ᾽, ὦ τέκνον, καὶ θάρσος ἴσχ᾽· ὡς ἥδε μοι
ὀξεῖα φοιτᾷ καὶ ταχεῖ᾽ ἀπέρχεται.
Ἀλλ᾽ ἀντιάζω, μή με καταλίπῃς μόνον.
ΝΕ. Θάρσει, μενοῦμεν.

ΦΙ. Ἦ μενεῖς;

ΝΕ. Σαφῶς φρόνει.

ΦΙ. Οὐ μήν σ᾽ ἔνορκόν γ᾽ ἀξιῶ θέσθαι, τέκνον.

ΝΕ. Ὡς οὐ θέμις γ’ ἐμοί ‘στι σοῦ μολεῖν ἄτερ.

ΦΙ. Ἔμβαλλε χειρὸς πίστιν.

ΝΕ. Ἐμβάλλω μενεῖν.

ΦΙ. Ἐκεῖσε νῦν μ’, ἐκεῖσε -

ΝΕ. Ποῖ λέγεις;

ΦΙ. Ἄνω -

815 ΝΕ. Τί παραφρονεῖς αὖ; τί τὸν ἄνω λεύσσεις κύκλον;

ΦΙ. Μέθες, μέθες με.

ΝΕ. Ποῖ μεθῶ;

ΦΙ. Μέθες ποτέ.

ΝΕ. Οὔ φημ’ ἐάσειν.

ΦΙ. Ἀπό μ’ ὀλεῖς, ἢν προσθίγῃς.

ΝΕ. Καὶ δὴ μεθίημ’, ‹εἴ› τι δὴ πλέον φρονεῖς.

ΦΙ. Ὦ γαῖα, δέξαι θανάσιμόν μ’ ὅπως ἔχω·
820 τὸ γὰρ κακὸν τόδ’ οὐκέτ’ ὀρθοῦσθαί μ’ ἐᾷ.

ΝΕ. Τὸν ἄνδρ’ ἔοικεν ὕπνος οὐ μακροῦ χρόνου
ἕξειν· κάρα γὰρ ὑπτιάζεται τόδε,
ἱδρώς γέ τοί νιν πᾶν καταστάζει δέμας,
μέλαινά τ’ ἄκρου τις παρέρρωγεν ποδὸς
825 αἱμορραγὴς φλέψ. Ἀλλ’ ἐάσωμεν, φίλοι,
ἔκηλον αὐτόν, ὡς ἂν εἰς ὕπνον πέσῃ.

ΧΟ. Ὕπν’ ὀδύνας ἀδαής, Ὕπνε δ’ ἀλγέων, Str.
εὐαὴς ἡμῖν ἔλθοις, ‹εὐαίων,›
830 εὐαίων ὦναξ· ὄμμασι δ’ ἀντίσχοις
τάνδ’ αἴγλαν, ἃ τέταται τανῦν·
ἴθι ἴθι μοι παιών. -
Ὦ τέκνον, ὅρα ποῦ στάσῃ,
ποῖ δὲ βάσῃ, πῶς δέ μοι τἀντεῦθεν
835 φροντίδος. Ὁρᾷς ἤδη.
Πρὸς τί μένομεν πράσσειν;
Καιρός τοι πάντων γνώμαν ἴσχων

‹πολύ τι› πολὺ παρὰ πόδα κράτος ἄρνυται.

ΝΕ. Ἀλλ’ ὅδε μὲν κλύει οὐδέν, ἐγὼ δ’ ὁρῶ οὔνεκα θήραν
τήνδ’ ἀλίως ἔχομεν τόξων, δίχα τοῦδε πλέοντες·
Τοῦδε γὰρ ὁ στέφανος, τοῦτον θεὸς εἶπε κομίζειν.
Κομπεῖν δ’ ἔστ’ ἀτελῆ σὺν ψεύδεσιν αἰσχρὸν ὄνειδος.

ΧΟ. Ἀλλά, τέκνον, τάδε μὲν θεὸς ὄψεται· Ant.
ὧν δ’ ἂν κἀμείβῃ μ’ αὖθις, βαιάν μοι,
βαιάν, ὦ τέκνον, πέμπε λόγων φάμαν·
ὡς πάντων ἐν νόσῳ εὐδρακὴς
ὕπνος ἄϋπνος λεύσσειν. -
Ἀλλ’ ὅ τι δύνᾳ μάκιστον,
‹δή› μοι, κεῖνο ‹λάθρᾳ› λάθρᾳ
ἐξιδοῦ ὅπως πράξεις.
Οἶσθα γὰρ ὃν αὐδῶμαι.
Εἰ ταύταν τούτῳ γνώμαν ἴσχεις,
μάλα τοι ἄπορα πυκινοῖς ἐνιδεῖν πάθη.
Οὖρός τοι, τέκνον, οὖρος· ἀ-Ερ.
νὴρ δ’ ἀνόμματος, οὐδ’ ἔχων ἀρωγάν,
ἐκτέταται νύχιος, -
ἀλεὴς ὕπνος ἐσθλός, -
οὐ χερός, οὐ ποδός, οὔ τινος ἄρχων,
ἀλλ’ ὥς τίς ‹τ’› Ἄϊδᾳ παρακείμενος.
Ὅρα, βλέπ’ εἰ καίρια
φθέγγῃ· τὸ δ’ ἀλώσιμον
ἐμᾷ φροντίδι, παῖ, πόνος
ὁ μὴ φοβῶν κράτιστος.
ΝΕ. Σιγᾶν κελεύω, μηδ’ ἀφεστάναι φρενῶν·
κινεῖ γὰρ ἀνὴρ ὄμμα κἀνάγει κάρα.

ΦΙ. Ὦ φέγγος ὕπνου διάδοχον, τό τ’ ἐλπίδων

ἄπιστον οἰκούρημα τῶνδε τῶν ξένων·
οὐ γάρ ποτ’, ὦ παῖ, τοῦτ’ ἂν ἐξηύχησ’ ἐγὼ
τλῆναί σ’ ἐλεινῶς ὧδε τἀμὰ πήματα
μεῖναι παρόντα καὶ ξυνωφελοῦντά μοι.
Οὔκουν Ἀτρεῖδαι τοῦτ’ ἔτλησαν εὐφόρως
οὕτως ἐνεγκεῖν, ἀγαθοὶ στρατηλάται.
Ἀλλ’ - εὐγενὴς γὰρ ἡ φύσις κἀξ εὐγενῶν,
ὦ τέκνον, ἡ σή, - πάντα ταῦτ’ ἐν εὐχερεῖ
ἔθου, βοῆς τε καὶ δυσοσμίας γέμων.
Καὶ νῦν ἐπειδὴ τοῦδε τοῦ κακοῦ δοκεῖ
λήθη τις εἶναι κἀνάπαυλα δή, τέκνον,
σύ μ’ αὐτὸς ἆρον, σύ με κατάστησον, τέκνον,
ἵν’, ἡνίκ’ ἂν κόπος μ’ ἀπαλλάξῃ ποτέ,
ὁρμώμεθ’ ἐς ναῦν μηδ’ ἐπίσχωμεν τὸ πλεῖν.

ΝΕ. Ἀλλ’ ἥδομαι μέν σ’ εἰσιδὼν παρ’ ἐλπίδα
ἀνώδυνον βλέποντα κἀμπνέοντ’ ἔτι·
ὡς οὐκέτ’ ὄντος γὰρ τὰ συμβόλαιά σου
πρὸς τὰς παρούσας ξυμφορὰς ἐφαίνετο.
Νῦν δ’ αἶρε σαυτόν· εἰ δέ σοι μᾶλλον φίλον,
οἴσουσί σ’ οἵδε· τοῦ πόνου γὰρ οὐκ ὄκνος,
ἐπείπερ οὕτω σοί τ’ ἔδοξ’ ἐμοί τε δρᾶν.

ΦΙ. Αἰνῶ τάδ’, ὦ παῖ, καί μ’ ἔπαιρ’, ὥσπερ νοεῖς·
τούτους δ’ ἔασον, μὴ βαρυνθῶσιν κακῇ
ὀσμῇ πρὸ τοῦ δέοντος· οὐπὶ νηὶ γὰρ
ἄλις πόνος τούτοισι συνναίειν ἐμοί.

ΝΕ. Ἔσται τάδ’· ἀλλ’ ἵστω τε καὐτὸς ἀντέχου.

ΦΙ. Θάρσει· τό τοι σύνηθες ὀρθώσει μ’ ἔθος.
ΝΕ. Παπαῖ· τί δῆτ’ ἀ‹ν› δρῷμ’ ἐγὼ τοὐνθένδε γε;

ΦΙ. Τί δ’ ἔστιν, ὦ παῖ; ποῖ ποτ’ ἐξέβης λόγῳ;

ΝΕ. Οὐκ οἶδ’ ὅποι χρὴ τἄπορον τρέπειν ἔπος.

ΦΙ. Ἀπορεῖς δὲ τοῦ σύ; μὴ λέγ’, ὦ τέκνον, τάδε.

ΝΕ. Ἀλλ’ ἐνθάδ’ ἤδη τοῦδε τοῦ πάθους κυρῶ.
ΦΙ. Οὐ δή σε δυσχέρεια τοῦ νοσήματος
ἔπεισεν ὥστε μή μ’ ἄγειν ναύτην ἔτι;

ΝΕ. Ἅπαντα δυσχέρεια, τὴν αὐτοῦ φύσιν
ὅταν λιπών τις δρᾷ τὰ μὴ προσεικότα.

ΦΙ. Ἀλλ’ οὐδὲν ἔξω τοῦ φυτεύσαντος σύ γε
δρᾷς οὐδὲ φωνεῖς, ἐσθλὸν ἄνδρ’ ἐπωφελῶν.

ΝΕ. Αἰσχρὸς φανοῦμαι· τοῦτ’ ἀνιῶμαι πάλαι.

ΦΙ. Οὔκουν ἐν οἷς γε δρᾷς· ἐν οἷς δ’ αὐδᾷς ὀκνῶ.

ΝΕ. Ὦ Ζεῦ, τί δράσω; δεύτερον ληφθῶ κακός,
κρύπτων θ’ ἃ μὴ δεῖ καὶ λέγων αἴσχιστ’ ἐπῶν;
910 ΦΙ. Ἀνὴρ ὅδ’, εἰ μὴ ‘γὼ κακὸς γνώμην ἔφυν,
προδούς μ’ ἔοικεν κἀκλιπὼν τὸν πλοῦν στελεῖν.

ΝΕ. Λιπὼν μὲν οὐκ ἔγωγε, λυπηρῶς δὲ μὴ
πέμπω σε μᾶλλον, τοῦτ’ ἀνιῶμαι πάλαι.

ΦΙ. Τί ποτε λέγεις, ὦ τέκνον; ὡς οὐ μανθάνω.
915 ΝΕ. Οὐδέν σε κρύψω· δεῖ γὰρ ἐς Τροίαν σε πλεῖν
πρὸς τοὺς Ἀχαιοὺς καὶ τὸν Ἀτρειδῶν στόλον.

ΦΙ. Οἴμοι, τί εἶπας;

ΝΕ. Μὴ στέναζε πρὶν μάθῃς.

ΦΙ. Ποῖον μάθημα; τί με νοεῖς δρᾶσαί ποτε;

ΝΕ. Σῶσαι κακοῦ μὲν πρῶτα τοῦδ’, ἔπειτα δὲ
920 ξὺν σοὶ τὰ Τροίας πεδία πορθῆσαι μολών.

ΦΙ. Καὶ ταῦτ’ ἀληθῆ δρᾶν νοεῖς;

ΝΕ. Πολλὴ κρατεῖ
τούτων ἀνάγκη· καὶ σὺ μὴ θυμοῦ κλύων.

ΦΙ. Ἀπόλωλα τλήμων, προδέδομαι. Τί μ’, ὦ ξένε,
δέδρακας; ἀπόδος ὡς τάχος τὰ τόξα μοι.
ΝΕ. Ἀλλ’ οὐχ οἷόν τε· τῶν γὰρ ἐν τέλει κλύειν
τό τ’ ἔνδικόν με καὶ τὸ συμφέρον ποεῖ.

ΦΙ. Ὦ πῦρ σὺ καὶ πᾶν δεῖμα καὶ πανουργίας
δεινῆς τέχνημ’ ἔχθιστον, οἷά μ’ εἰργάσω,
οἷ’ ἠπάτηκας· οὐδ’ ἐπαισχύνῃ μ’ ὁρῶν
τὸν προστρόπαιον, τὸν ἱκέτην, ὦ σχέτλιε;
Ἀπεστέρηκας τὸν βίον τὰ τόξ’ ἑλών·
ἀπόδος, ἱκνοῦμαί σ’, ἀπόδος, ἱκετεύω, τέκνον.
Πρὸς θεῶν πατρῴων, τὸν βίον μή μου ‘φέλῃς.
Ὤμοι τάλας. Ἀλλ’ οὐδὲ προσφωνεῖ μ’ ἔτι,
ἀλλ’ ὡς μεθήσων μήποθ’, ὧδ’ ὁρᾷ πάλιν.
Ὦ λιμένες, ὦ προβλῆτες, ὦ ξυνουσίαι
θηρῶν ὀρείων, ὦ καταρρῶγες πέτραι,
ὑμῖν τάδ’, οὐ γὰρ ἄλλον οἶδ’ ὅτῳ λέγω,
ἀνακλαίομαι παροῦσι τοῖς εἰωθόσιν
οἷ’ ἔργ’ ὁ παῖς μ’ ἔδρασεν οὐξ Ἀχιλλέως·
ὁμόσας ἀπάξειν οἴκαδ’, ἐς Τροίαν μ’ ἄγει·
προσθείς τε χεῖρα δεξιάν, τὰ τόξα μου
ἱερὰ λαβὼν τοῦ Ζηνὸς Ἡρακλέους ἔχει,
καὶ τοῖσιν Ἀργείοισι φήνασθαι θέλει.

Ὡς ἄνδρ’ ἐλὼν ἰσχυρὸν ἐκ βίας μ’ ἄγει,
κοὐκ οἶδ’ ἐναίρων νεκρόν, ἢ καπνοῦ σκιάν,
εἴδωλον ἄλλως· οὐ γὰρ ἂν σθένοντά γε
εἷλέν μ’· ἐπεὶ οὐδ’ ἂν ὧδ’ ἔχοντ’, εἰ μὴ δόλῳ.
Νῦν δ’ ἠπάτημαι δύσμορος· τί χρή με δρᾶν;
‹Ἀλλ’› ἀπόδος· ἀλλὰ νῦν ἔτ’ ἐν σαυτῷ γενοῦ.
Τί φῄς; σιωπᾷς. Οὐδέν εἰμ’ ὁ δύσμορος.
Ὦ σχῆμα πέτρας δίπυλον, αὖθις αὖ πάλιν
εἴσειμι πρὸς σὲ ψιλός, οὐκ ἔχων τροφήν,
ἀλλ’ αὐανοῦμαι τῷδ’ ἐν αὐλίῳ μόνος,
οὐ πτηνὸν ὄρνιν, οὐδὲ θῆρ’ ὀρειβάτην
τόξοις ἐναίρων τοισίδ’, ἀλλ’ αὐτὸς τάλας
θανὼν παρέξω δαῖθ’ ὑφ’ ὧν ἐφερβόμην,
καί μ’ οὓς ἐθήρων πρόσθε θηράσουσι νῦν·
φόνον φόνου δὲ ῥύσιον τείσω τάλας
πρὸς τοῦ δοκοῦντος οὐδὲν εἰδέναι κακόν.
Ὄλοιο - μήπω, πρὶν μάθοιμ’ εἰ καὶ πάλιν
γνώμην μετοίσεις· εἰ δὲ μή, θάνοις κακῶς.

ΧΟ. Τί δρῶμεν; ἐν σοὶ καὶ τὸ πλεῖν ἡμᾶς, ἄναξ,
ἤδη ‘στὶ καὶ τοῖς τοῦδε προσχωρεῖν λόγοις.
ΝΕ. Ἐμοὶ μὲν οἰκτος δεινὸς ἐμπέπτωκέ τις
τοῦδ’ ἀνδρὸς οὐ νῦν πρῶτον, ἀλλὰ καὶ πάλαι.

ΦΙ. Ἐλέησον, ὦ παῖ, πρὸς θεῶν, καὶ μὴ παρῇς
σαυτοῦ βροτοῖς ὄνειδος ἐκκλέψας ἐμέ.

ΝΕ. Οἴμοι, τί δράσω; μήποτ’ ὤφελον λιπεῖν
τὴν Σκῦρον· οὕτω τοῖς παροῦσιν ἄχθομαι.

ΦΙ. Οὐκ εἶ κακὸς σύ, πρὸς κακῶν δ’ ἀνδρῶν μαθὼν
ἔρικας ἥκειν αἰσχρά· νῦν δ’ ἄλλοισι δοὺς
οἷς εἰκός, ἔκπλει, τἀμά μοι μεθεὶς ὅπλα.

ΝΕ. Τί δρῶμεν, ἄνδρες;

ΟΔ. Ὦ κάκιστ’ ἀνδρῶν, τί δρᾷς;
975 Οὐκ εἶ, μεθεὶς τὰ τόξα ταῦτ’ ἐμοί, πάλιν;

ΦΙ. Οἴμοι, τίς ἀνήρ; ἆρ’ Ὀδυσσέως κλύω;

ΟΔ. Ὀδυσσέως, σάφ’ ἴσθ’, ἐμοῦ γ’, ὃν εἰσορᾷς.

ΦΙ. Οἴμοι· πέπραμαι κἀπόλωλ’· ὅδ’ ἦν ἄρα
ὁ ξυλλαβών με κἀπονοσφίσας ὅπλων.
980 ΟΔ. Ἐγώ, σάφ’ ἴσθ’, οὐκ ἄλλος· ὁμολογῶ τάδε.

ΦΙ. Ἀπόδος, ἄφες μοι, παῖ, τὰ τόξα.

ΟΔ. Τοῦτο μέν,
οὐδ’ ἢν θέλῃ, δράσει ποτ’· ἀλλὰ καὶ σὲ δεῖ
στείχειν ἄμ’ αὐτοῖς, ἢ βίᾳ στελοῦσί σε.

ΦΙ. Ἔμ’, ὦ κακῶν κάκιστε καὶ τολμήστατε,
985 οἵδ’ ἐκ βίας ἄξουσιν;

ΟΔ. Ἢν μὴ ‘ρπῃς ἐκών.

ΦΙ. Ὦ Λημνία χθὼν καὶ τὸ παγκρατὲς σέλας
Ἡφαιστότευκτον, ταῦτα δῆτ’ ἀνασχετά,
εἴ μ’ οὗτος ἐκ τῶν σῶν ἁπάξεται βίᾳ;

ΟΔ. Ζεύς ἐσθ’, ἵν’ εἰδῇς, Ζεύς, ὁ τῆσδε γῆς κρατῶν,
990 Ζεύς, ᾧ δέδοκται ταῦθ’· ὑπηρετῶ δ’ ἐγώ.

ΦΙ. Ὦ μῖσος, οἷα κἀξανευρίσκεις λέγειν·
θεοὺς προτείνων τοὺς θεοὺς ψευδεῖς τίθης.

ΟΔ. Οὔκ, ἀλλ’ ἀληθεῖς. Ἡ δ’ ὁδὸς πορευτέα.

ΦΙ. Οὔ φημ’ ἔγωγε.

ΟΔ. Φημί· πειστέον τάδε.
ΦΙ. Οἴμοι τάλας. Ἡμᾶς μὲν ὡς δούλους σαφῶς
πατὴρ ἄρ’ ἐξέφυσεν, οὐδ’ ἐλευθέρους.

ΟΔ. Οὔκ, ἀλλ’ ὁμοίους τοῖς ἀρίστοισιν, μεθ’ ὧν
Τροίαν σ’ ἐλεῖν δεῖ καὶ κατασκάψαι βίᾳ.

ΦΙ. Οὐδέποτέ γ’· οὐδ’ ἢν χρῇ με πᾶν παθεῖν κακόν,
ἔως ἂν ᾖ μοι γῆς τόδ’ αἰπεινὸν βάθρον.

ΟΔ. Τί δ’ ἐργασείεις;

ΦΙ. Κρᾶτ’ ἐμὸν τόδ’ αὐτίκα
πέτρᾳ πέτρας ἄνωθεν αἱμάξω πεσών.

ΟΔ. Ξυλλάβετέ γ’ αὐτόν· μὴ ‘πὶ τῷδ’ ἔστω τάδε.

ΦΙ. Ὦ χεῖρες, οἷα πάσχετ’ ἐν χρείᾳ φίλης
νευρᾶς, ὑπ’ ἀνδρὸς τοῦδε συνθηρώμεναι.
Ὦ μηδὲν ὑγιὲς μηδ’ ἐλεύθερον φρονῶν,
οἳ’ αὖ μ’ ὑπῆλθες, ὥς μ’ ἐθηράσω, λαβὼν
πρόβλημα σαυτοῦ παῖδα τόνδ’ ἀγνῶτ’ ἐμοί,
ἀνάξιον μὲν σοῦ, κατάξιον δ’ ἐμοῦ,
ὃς οὐδὲν ἤδει πλὴν τὸ προσταχθὲν ποεῖν,
δῆλος δὲ καὶ νῦν ἐστιν ἀλγεινῶς φέρων

οἷς τ’ αὐτὸς ἐξήμαρτεν οἷς τ’ ἐγὼ ‘παθον.
Ἀλλ’ ἡ κακὴ σὴ διὰ μυχῶν βλέπουσ’ ἀεὶ
ψυχή νιν ἀφυῆ τ’ ὄντα κοὐ θέλονθ’ ὅμως
εὖ προὐδίδαξεν ἐν κακοῖς εἶναι σοφόν.
Καὶ νῦν ἔμ’, ὦ δύστηνε, συνδήσας νοεῖς
ἄγειν ἀπ’ ἀκτῆς τῆσδ’, ἐν ᾗ με προὐβάλου
ἄφιλον, ἔρημον, ἄπολιν, ἐν ζῶσιν νεκρόν;
Φεῦ.
Ὅλοιο· καί σοι πολλάκις τόδ’ ηὐξάμην.
Ἀλλ’, οὐ γὰρ οὐδὲν θεοὶ νέμουσιν ἡδύ μοι,
σὺ μὲν γέγηθας ζῶν, ἐγὼ δ’ ἀλγύνομαι
τοῦτ’ αὖθ’, ὅτι ζῶ σὺν κακοῖς πολλοῖς τάλας,
γελώμενος πρὸς σοῦ τε καὶ τῶν Ἀτρέως
διπλῶν στρατηγῶν, οἷς σὺ ταῦθ’ ὑπηρετεῖς.
Καίτοι σὺ μὲν κλοπῇ τε κἀνάγκῃ ζυγεὶς
ἔπλεις ἅμ’ αὐτοῖς, ἐμὲ δὲ τὸν πανάθλιον,
ἑκόντα πλεύσανθ’ ἑπτὰ ναυσὶ ναυβάτην,
ἄτιμον ἔβαλον, ὡς σὺ φῄς, κεῖνοι δὲ σέ.
Καὶ νῦν τί μ’ ἄγετε; τί μ’ ἀπάγεσθε; τοῦ χάριν;
ὃς οὐδέν εἰμι καὶ τέθνηχ’ ὑμῖν πάλαι.
Πῶς, ὦ θεοῖς ἔχθιστε, νῦν οὐκ εἰμί σοι
χωλός, δυσώδης; πῶς θεοῖς ἔξεστ’, ἐμοῦ
πλεύσαντος, αἴθειν ἱερά, πῶς σπένδειν ἔτι;
αὕτη γὰρ ἦν σοι πρόφασις ἐκβαλεῖν ἐμέ.
Κακῶς ὄλοισθ’· ὀλεῖσθε δ’ ἠδικηκότες
τὸν ἄνδρα τόνδε, θεοῖσιν εἰ δίκης μέλει.
Ἔξοιδα δ’ ὡς μέλει γ’· ἐπεὶ οὔποτ’ ἂν στόλον
ἐπλεύσατ’ ἂν τόνδ’ οὕνεκ’ ἀνδρὸς ἀθλίου,
εἰ μή τι κέντρον θεῖον ἦγ’ ὑμᾶς ἐμοῦ.
Ἀλλ’, ὦ πατρῴα γῆ θεοί τ’ ἐπόψιοι,
τείσασθε, τείσασθ’ ἀλλὰ τῷ χρόνῳ ποτὲ
ξύμπαντας αὐτούς, εἴ τι κἄμ’ οἰκτίρετε·
ὡς ζῶ μὲν οἰκτρῶς, εἰ δ’ ἴδοιμ’ ὀλωλότας
τούτους, δοκοῖμ’ ἂν τῆς νόσου πεφευγέναι.
ΧΟ. Βαρύς τε καὶ βαρεῖαν ὁ ξένος φάτιν
τήνδ’ εἶπ’, Ὀδυσσεῦ, κοὐχ ὑπείκουσαν κακοῖς·

ΟΔ. Πόλλ’ ἂν λέγειν ἔχοιμι πρὸς τὰ τοῦδ’ ἔπη,
εἴ μοι παρείκοι· νῦν δ’ ἑνὸς κρατῶ λόγου.
Οὐ γὰρ τοιούτων δεῖ, τοιοῦτός εἰμ’ ἐγώ·
χὤπου δικαίων κἀγαθῶν ἀνδρῶν κρίσις,
οὐκ ἂν λάβοις μου μᾶλλον οὐδέν’ εὐσεβῆ.
Νικᾶν γε μέντοι πανταχοῦ χρῄζων ἔφυν,
πλὴν εἰς σέ· νῦν δὲ σοί γ’ ἐκὼν ἐκστήσομαι.
Ἄφετε γὰρ αὐτόν, μηδὲ προσψαύσητ’ ἔτι·
ἐᾶτε μίμνειν. Οὐδὲ σοῦ προσχρῄζομεν,
τά γ’ ὅπλ’ ἔχοντες ταῦτ’· ἐπεὶ πάρεστι μὲν
Τεῦκρος παρ’ ἡμῖν, τήνδ’ ἐπιστήμην ἔχων,
ἐγώ θ’, ὃς οἶμαι σοῦ κάκιον οὐδὲν ἂν
τούτων κρατύνειν, μηδ’ ἐπιθύνειν χερί.
Τί δῆτα σοῦ δεῖ; χαῖρε τὴν Λῆμνον πατῶν·
ἡμεῖς δ’ ἴωμεν· καὶ τάχ’ ἂν τὸ σὸν γέρας
τιμὴν ἐμοὶ νείμειεν, ἣν σὲ χρῆν ἔχειν.

ΦΙ. Οἴμοι· τί δράσω δύσμορος; Σὺ τοῖς ἐμοῖς
ὅπλοισι κοσμηθεὶς ἐν Ἀργείοις φανῇ;
ΟΔ. Μή μ’ ἀντιφώνει μηδέν, ὡς στείχοντα δή.

ΦΙ. Ὦ σπέρμ’ Ἀχιλλέως, οὐδὲ σοῦ φωνῆς ἔτι
γενήσομαι προσφθεγκτός, ἀλλ’ οὕτως ἄπει;

ΟΔ. Χώρει σύ· μὴ πρόσλευσσε, γενναῖός περ ὤν,
ἡμῶν ὅπως μὴ τὴν τύχην διαφθερεῖς.
ΦΙ. Ἦ καὶ πρὸς ὑμῶν ὧδ’ ἔρημος, ὦ ξένοι,
λειφθήσομαι δὴ κοὐκ ἐποικτιρεῖτέ με;

ΧΟ. Ὅδ’ ἐστὶν ἡμῶν ναυκράτωρ ὁ παῖς· ὅσ’ ἂν
οὗτος λέγῃ σοι, ταῦτά σοι χἡμεῖς φαμεν.

ΝΕ. Ἀκούσομαι μὲν ὡς ἔφυν οἴκτου πλέως
1075 πρὸς τοῦδ’· ὅμως δὲ μείνατ’, εἰ τούτῳ δοκεῖ,
χρόνον τοσοῦτον εἰς ὅσον τά τ’ ἐκ νεὼς
στείλωσι ναῦται καὶ θεοῖς εὐξώμεθα.
χοὗτος τάχ’ ἂν φρόνησιν ἐν τούτῳ λάβοι
λῴω τιν’ ἡμῖν. Νὼ μὲν οὖν ὁρμώμεθον,
1080 ὑμεῖς δ’, ὅταν καλῶμεν, ὁρμᾶσθαι ταχεῖς.

ΦΙ. Ὦ κοίλας πέτρας γύαλον Str. 1 .
θερμὸν καὶ παγετῶδες, ὡς σ’
οὐκ ἔμελλον ἄρ’, ὦ τάλας,
λείψειν οὐδέποτ’, ἀλλά μοι
1085 καὶ θνῄσκοντι συνείσῃ.
Ὤμοι μοί μοι.
Ὦ πληρέστατον αὔλιον
λύπας τᾶς ἀπ’ ἐμοῦ τάλαν,
τίπτ’ αὖ μοι τὸ κατ’ ἦμαρ ἔσ-
1090 ται; τοῦ ποτε τεύξομαι
σιτονόμου μέλεος πόθεν ἐλπίδος;
ἴθ’ αἰθέρος ἄνω
πτωκάδες ὀξυτόνου διὰ πνεύματος·
ἄλωσιν οὐκέτ’ ἴσχω.
1095 ΧΟ. Σύ τοι σύ τοι κατηξίω-
σας, ὦ βαρύποτμ’, οὐκ
ἄλλοθεν ἃ τύχα ἄδ’ ἀπὸ μείζονος,
εὖτέ γε παρὸν φρονῆσαι
τοῦ λῴονος δαίμονος εἴ-
1100 λου τὸ κάκιον αἱνεῖν.

ΦΙ. Ὦ τλάμων τλάμων ἄρ’ ἐγὼ Ant. 1 .
καὶ μόχθῳ λωβατός, ὃς ἤ-
δη μετ’ οὐδενὸς ὕστερον
ἀνδρῶν εἰσοπίσω τάλας
1105 ναίων ἐνθάδ’ ὀλοῦμαι,
αἰαῖ αἰαῖ,
οὐ φορβὰν ἔτι προσφέρων,
οὐ πτανῶν ἀπ’ ἐμῶν ὅπλων
1110 κραταιαῖς μετὰ χερσὶν ἴσ-
χων· ἀλλά μοι ἄσκοπα
κρυπτά τ’ ἔπη δολερᾶς ὑπέδυ φρενός·
ἰδοίμαν δέ νιν,
τὸν τάδε μησάμενον, τὸν ἴσον χρόνον
1115 ἐμὰς λαχόντ’ ἀνίας.

ΧΟ. Πότμος, ‹πότμος› σε δαιμόνων
τάδ’, οὐδὲ σέ γε δόλος
ἔσχ’ ὑπὸ χειρὸς ἐμᾶς· στυγερὰν ἔχε
1120 δύσποτμον ἀρὰν ἐπ’ ἄλλοις·
καὶ γὰρ ἐμοὶ τοῦτο μέλει,
μὴ φιλότητ’ ἀπώσῃ.

ΦΙ. Οἴμοι μοι, καί που πολιᾶς Str. 2 .
πόντου θινὸς ἐφήμενος,
1125 γελᾷ μου, χερὶ πάλλων
τὰν ἐμὰν μελέου τροφάν,
τὰν οὐδείς ποτ’ ἐβάστασεν.
Ὦ τόξον φίλον, ὦ φίλων
χειρῶν ἐκβεβιασμένον,
1130 ἦ που ἐλεινὸν ὁρᾷς, φρένας εἴ τινας
ἔχεις, τὸν Ἡράκλειον
ἄθλιον ὧδέ σοι
οὐκέτι χρησόμενον τὸ μεθύστερον,

ἄλλου δ’ ἐν μεταλλαγᾷ
πολυμηχάνου ἀνδρὸς ἐρέσσῃ,
ὁρῶν μὲν αἰσχρὰς ἀπάτας,
στυγνόν τε φῶτ’ ἐχθοδοπόν,
μυρί’ ἀπ’ αἰσχρῶν ἀνατέλλονθ’ ὅσ’ ἐφ’ ἡ-
μῖν κάκ’ ἐμήσατ’ οὐδείς.
ΧΟ. Ἀνδρός τοι τὸ μὲν εὖ δίκαιον εἰπεῖν,
εἰπόντος δὲ μὴ φθονερὰν
ἐξῶσαι γλώσσας ὀδύναν.
Κεῖνος δ’ εἷς ἀπὸ πολλῶν
ταχθεὶς τῶνδ’ ἐφημοσύνᾳ
κοινὰν ἤνυσεν ἐς φίλους ἀρωγάν.

ΦΙ. Ὦ πταναὶ θῆραι χαροπῶν τ’ Ant. 2 .
ἔθνη θηρῶν, οὓς ὅδ’ ἔχει
χῶρος οὐρεσιβώτας,
φυγᾷ μ’ οὐκέτ’ ἀπ’ αὐλίων
πελᾶτ’· οὐ γὰρ ἔχω χεροῖν
τὰν πρόσθεν βελέων ἀλκάν,
ὦ δύστανος ἐγὼ τανῦν,
ἀλλ’ ἀνέδην ὅδε χῶρος ἐρύκεται,
οὐκέτι φοβητὸς ὑμῖν.
Ἕρπετε, νῦν καλὸν
ἀντίφονον κορέσαι στόμα πρὸς χάριν
ἐμᾶς σαρκὸς αἰόλας·
ἀπὸ γὰρ βίον αὐτίκα λείψω.
Πόθεν γὰρ ἔσται βιοτά;
τίς ὧδ’ ἐν αὔραις τρέφεται,
μηκέτι μηδενὸς κρατύνων ὅσα πέμ-
πει βιόδωρος αἶα;

ΧΟ. Πρὸς θεῶν, εἴ τι σέβῃ ξένον, πέλασσον,
εὐνοίᾳ πάσᾳ πελάταν·
ἀλλὰ γνῶθ’, εὖ γνῶθ’, ὅτι σὸν

κῆρα τάνδ’ ἀποφεύγειν·
οἰκτρὰ γὰρ βόσκειν, ἀδαὴς δ’
ἔχειν μυρίον ἄχθος ὃ ξυνοικεῖ.

ΦΙ. Πάλιν, πάλιν παλαιὸν ἄλ-
γημ’ ὑπέμνασας, ὦ
λῷστε τῶν πρὶν ἐντόπων.
Τί μ’ ὤλεσας; τί μ’ εἴργασαι;

ΧΟ. Τί τοῦτ’ ἔλεξας;

ΦΙ. Εἰ σὺ τὰν ἐμοὶ στυγερὰν
Τρῳάδα γᾶν μ’ ἦλπισας ἄξειν.

ΧΟ. Τόδε γὰρ νοῶ κράτιστον.

ΦΙ. Ἀπό νύν με λείπετ’ ἤδη.

ΧΟ. Φίλα μοι, φίλα ταῦτα παρήγγει-
λας ἐκόντι τε πράσσειν.
Ἴωμεν, ἴωμεν
ναὸς ἵν’ ἡμῖν τέτακται.

ΦΙ. Μή, πρὸς ἀραίου Διός, ἔλ-
θῃς, ἱκετεύω.

ΧΟ. Μετρίαζ’.

ΦΙ. Ὦ ξένοι,
1185 μείνατε, πρὸς θεῶν.

ΧΟ. Τί θροεῖς;

ΦΙ. Αἰαῖ αἰαῖ,
δαίμων δαίμων· ἀπόλωλ’ ὁ τάλας·
ὦ πούς, πούς, τί σ’ ἔτ’ ἐν βίῳ
τεύξῳ τῷ μετόπιν τάλας;
1190 Ὦ ξένοι, ἔλθετ’ ἐπήλυδες αὖθις.

ΧΟ. Τί ῥέξοντες ἀλλοκότῳ
γνώμᾳ τῶν πάρος, ὧν προὔφαινες;

ΦΙ. Οὗτοι νεμεσητὸν
ἀλύοντα χειμερίῳ
1195 λύπᾳ καὶ παρὰ νοῦν θροεῖν.

ΧΟ. Βᾶθί νυν, ὦ τάλαν, ὥς σε κελεύομεν.

ΦΙ. Οὐδέποτ’ οὐδέποτ’, ἴσθι τόδ’ ἔμπεδον,
οὐδ’ εἰ πυρφόρος ἀστεροπητὴς
βροντᾶς αὐγαῖς μ’ εἶσι φλογίζων.
1200 Ἐρρέτω Ἴλιον, οἵ θ’ ὑπ’ ἐκείνῳ
πάντες ὅσοι τόδ’ ἔτλασαν ἐμοῦ ποδὸς
ἄρθρον ἀπῶσαι.
Ἀλλ’, ὦ ξένοι, ἕν γέ μοι εὖχος ὀρέξατε.

ΧΟ. Ποῖον ἐρεῖς τόδ’ ἔπος;

ΦΙ. Ξίφος, εἴ ποθεν,
1205 ἢ γένυν ἢ βελέων τι προπέμψατε.

ΧΟ. Ὡς τίνα ‹δὴ› ῥέξῃς παλάμαν ποτέ;

ΦΙ. Κρᾶτ’ ἀπὸ πάντα καὶ ἄρθρα τέμω χερί·
φονᾷ, φονᾷ νόος ἤδη.

ΧΟ. Τί ποτε;
1210 ΦΙ. Πατέρα ματεύων.

ΧΟ. Ποῖ γᾶς;

ΦΙ. Ἐς Ἅιδου·
οὐ γὰρ [ἐστ’] ἐν φάει γ’ ἔτι.
Ὦ πόλις, ὦ [πόλις] πατρία,
πῶς ἂν εἰσίδοιμί σ’ ἄθλιός γ’ ἀνήρ,
1215 ὅς γε σὰν λιπὼν ἱερὰν λιβάδ’
ἐχθροῖσ‹ιν› ἔβαν Δαναοῖς
ἀρωγός; ἔτ’ οὐδέν εἰμι.

ΧΟ. Ἐγὼ μὲν ἤδη καὶ πάλαι νεὼς ὁμοῦ
στείχων ἂν ἦ σοι τῆς ἐμῆς, εἰ μὴ πέλας
1220 Ὀδυσσέα στείχοντα τόν τ’ Ἀχιλλέως
γόνον πρὸς ἡμᾶς δεῦρ’ ἰόντ’ ἐλεύσσομεν.

ΟΔ. Οὐκ ἂν φράσειας ἤντιν’ αὖ παλίντροπος
κέλευθον ἕρπεις ὧδε σὺν σπουδῇ ταχύς;

ΝΕ. Λύσων ὅσ’ ἐξήμαρτον ἐν τῷ πρὶν χρόνῳ.
1225 ΟΔ. Δεινόν γε φωνεῖς· ἡ δ’ ἁμαρτία τίς ἦν;

ΝΕ. Ἣν σοὶ πιθόμενος τῷ τε σύμπαντι στρατῷ -

ΟΔ. Ἔπραξας ἔργον ποῖον ὧν οὔ σοι πρέπον;

ΝΕ. Ἀπάταισιν αἰσχραῖς ἄνδρα καὶ δόλοις ἑλών.

ΟΔ. Τὸν ποῖον; ὤμοι· μῶν τι βουλεύῃ νέον;
1230 ΝΕ. Νέον μὲν οὐδέν, τῷ δὲ Ποίαντος τόκῳ -

ΟΔ. Τί χρῆμα δράσεις; ὡς μ’ ὑπῆλθέ τις φόβος.

ΝΕ. Παρ’ οὗπερ ἔλαβον τάδε τὰ τόξ’, αὖθις πάλιν -

ΟΔ. Ὦ Ζεῦ, τί λέξεις; οὔ τί που δοῦναι νοεῖς;

ΝΕ. Αἰσχρῶς γὰρ αὐτὰ κοὐ δίκῃ λαβὼν ἔχω.
1235 ΟΔ. Πρὸς θεῶν, πότερα δὴ κερτομῶν λέγεις τάδε;

ΝΕ. Εἰ κερτόμησίς ἐστι τἀληθῆ λέγειν.

ΟΔ. Τί φῄς, Ἀχιλλέως παῖ; τίν’ εἴρηκας λόγον;

ΝΕ. Δὶς ταὐτὰ βούλει καὶ τρὶς ἀναπολεῖν μ’ ἔπη;

ΟΔ. Ἀρχὴν κλύειν ἂν οὐδ’ ἅπαξ ἐβουλόμην.
ΝΕ. Εὖ νῦν ἐπίστω πάντ’ ἀκηκοὼς λόγον.

ΟΔ. Ἔστιν τις, ἔστιν ὅς σε κωλύσει τὸ δρᾶν.

ΝΕ. Τί φῄς; τίς ἔσται μ’ οὐπικωλύσων τάδε;

ΟΔ. Ξύμπας Ἀχαιῶν λαός, ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἐγώ.

ΝΕ. Σοφὸς πεφυκὼς οὐδὲν ἐξαυδᾷς σοφόν.
ΟΔ. Σὺ δ’ οὔτε φωνεῖς οὔτε δρασείεις σοφά.

ΝΕ. Ἀλλ’ εἰ δίκαια, τῶν σοφῶν κρείσσω τάδε.

ΟΔ. Καὶ πῶς δίκαιον, ἅ γ’ ἔλαβες βουλαῖς ἐμαῖς,
πάλιν μεθεῖναι ταῦτα;

ΝΕ. Τὴν ἁμαρτίαν
αἰσχρὰν ἁμαρτὼν ἀναλαβεῖν πειράσομαι.
1250 ΟΔ. Στρατὸν δ’ Ἀχαιῶν οὐ φοβῇ, πράσσων τάδε;

ΝΕ. Ξὺν τῷ δικαίῳ τὸν σὸν οὐ ταρβῶ ‹στρατόν›.

ΟΔ. . . . . φόβον

ΝΕ. Ἀλλ’ οὐδέ τοι σῇ χειρὶ πείθομαι τὸ δρᾶν.

ΟΔ. Οὔ τἄρα Τρωσίν, ἀλλὰ σοὶ μαχούμεθα.

ΝΕ. Ἔστω τὸ μέλλον.

ΟΔ. Χεῖρα δεξιὰν ὁρᾷς
1255 κώπης ἐπιψαύουσαν;

ΝΕ. Ἀλλὰ κἀμέ τοι
ταὐτὸν τόδ’ ὄψει δρῶντα κοὐ μέλλοντ’ ἔτι.

ΟΔ. Καίτοι σ’ ἐάσω· τῷ δὲ σύμπαντι στρατῷ
λέξω τάδ’ ἐλθών, ὅς σε τιμωρήσεται.

ΝΕ. Ἐσωφρόνησας· κἂν τὰ λοίφ’ οὕτω φρονῇς,
1260 ἴσως ἂν ἐκτὸς κλαυμάτων ἔχοις πόδα.
Σὺ δ’, ὦ Ποίαντος παῖ, Φιλοκτήτην λέγω,
ἔξελθ’ ἀμείψας τάσδε πετρήρεις στέγας.

ΦΙ. Τίς αὖ παρ’ ἄντροις θόρυβος ἵσταται βοῆς;
τί μ’ ἐκκαλεῖσθε; τοῦ κεχρημένοι, ξένοι;
1265 Ὤμοι· κακὸν τὸ χρῆμα. Μῶν τί μοι μέγα
πάρεστε πρὸς κακοῖσι πέμποντες κακόν;

ΝΕ. Θάρσει· λόγους δ’ ἄκουσον οὓς ἥκω φέρων.

ΦΙ. Δέδοικ’ ἔγωγε. Καὶ τὰ πρὶν γὰρ ἐκ λόγων
καλῶν κακῶς ἔπραξα σοῖς πεισθεὶς λόγοις.
1270 ΝΕ. Οὔκουν ἔνεστι καὶ μεταγνῶναι πάλιν;

ΦΙ. Τοιοῦτος ἦσθα τοῖς λόγοισι χὤτε μου
τὰ τόξ’ ἔκλεπτες πιστὸς ἀτηρὸς λάθρᾳ.

ΝΕ. Ἀλλ’ οὔ τι μὴν νῦν· βούλομαι δέ σου κλύειν
πότερα δέδοκταί σοι μένοντι καρτερεῖν,
1275 ἢ πλεῖν μεθ’ ἡμῶν.

ΦΙ. Παῦε, μὴ λέξῃς πέρα·
μάτην γὰρ ἂν εἴπῃς γε πάντ’ εἰρήσεται.

ΝΕ. Οὕτω δέδοκται;

ΦΙ. Καὶ πέρα γ’ ἴσθ’ ἢ λέγω.

ΝΕ. Ἀλλ’ ἤθελον μὲν ἄν σε πεισθῆναι λόγοις
ἐμοῖσιν· εἰ δὲ μή τι πρὸς καιρὸν λέγων
1280 κυρῶ, πέπαυμαι.

ΦΙ. Πάντα γὰρ φράσεις μάτην.
οὐ γάρ ποτ’ εὔνουν τὴν ἐμὴν κτήσῃ φρένα,
ὅστις γ’ ἐμοῦ δόλοισι τὸν βίον λαβὼν
ἀπεστέρηκας· κᾆτα νουθετεῖς ἐμὲ
ἐλθών, ἀρίστου πατρὸς ἔχθιστος γεγώς.
1285 Ὅλοισθ’, Ἀτρεῖδαι μὲν μάλιστ’, ἔπειτα δὲ
ὁ Λαρτίου παῖς, καὶ σύ.

ΝΕ. Μὴ ‘πεύξῃ πέρα·
δέχου δὲ χειρὸς ἐξ ἐμῆς βέλη τάδε.

ΦΙ. Πῶς εἶπας; ἆρα δεύτερον δολούμεθα;

ΝΕ. Ἀπώμοσ’ ἀγνοῦ Ζηνὸς ὕψιστον σέβας.
1290 ΦΙ. Ὦ φίλτατ’ εἰπών, εἰ λέγεις ἐτήτυμα.

ΝΕ. Τοὔργον παρέσται φανερόν· ἀλλὰ δεξιὰν
πρότεινε χεῖρα, καὶ κράτει τῶν σῶν ὅπλων.

ΟΔ. Ἐγὼ δ’ ἀπαυδῶ γ’, ᾧ θεοὶ ξυνίστορες,
ὑπέρ ‹τ’› Ἀτρειδῶν τοῦ τε σύμπαντος στρατοῦ.
1295 ΦΙ. Τέκνον, τίνος φώνημα; μῶν Ὀδυσσέως
ἐπῃσθόμην;

ΟΔ. Σάφ’ ἴσθι· καὶ πέλας γ’ ὁρᾷς,
ὅς σ’ ἐς τὰ Τροίας πεδί’ ἀποστελῶ βίᾳ,
ἐάν τ’ Ἀχιλλέως παῖς ἐάν τε μὴ θέλῃ.

ΦΙ. Ἀλλ’ οὔ τι χαίρων, ἢν τόδ’ ὀρθωθῇ βέλος.
1300 ΝΕ. Ἆ, μηδαμῶς, μὴ πρὸς θεῶν, μεθῇς βέλος.

ΦΙ. Μέθες με, πρὸς θεῶν, χεῖρα, φίλτατον τέκνον.

ΝΕ. Οὐκ ἂν μεθείην.

ΦΙ. Φεῦ· τί μ’ ἄνδρα πολέμιον
ἐχθρόν τ’ ἀφείλου μὴ κτανεῖν τόξοις ἐμοῖς;

ΝΕ. Ἀλλ’ οὔτ’ ἐμοὶ τοῦτ’ ἐστὶν οὔτε σοὶ καλόν.
ΦΙ. Ἀλλ’ οὖν τοσοῦτόν γ’ ἴσθι, τοὺς πρώτους στρατοῦ,
τοὺς τῶν Ἀχαιῶν ψευδοκήρυκας, κακοὺς
ὄντας πρὸς αἰχμήν, ἐν δὲ τοῖς λόγοις θρασεῖς.

ΝΕ. Εἶεν· τὰ μὲν δὴ τόξ’ ἔχεις, κοὐκ ἔσθ’ ὅτου
ὀργὴν ἔχοις ἂν οὐδὲ μέμψιν εἰς ἐμέ.
ΦΙ. Ξύμφημι, τὴν φύσιν δ’ ἔδειξας, ὦ τέκνον,
ἐξ ἧς ἔβλαστες, οὐχὶ Σισύφου πατρός,
ἀλλ’ ἐξ Ἀχιλλέως, ὃς μετὰ ζώντων ὅτ’ ἦν
ἤκου’ ἄριστα, νῦν δὲ τῶν τεθνηκότων.

ΝΕ. Ἤσθην πατέρα τὸν ἀμὸν εὐλογοῦντά σε
αὐτόν τ’ ἔμ’· ὧν δέ σου τυχεῖν ἐφίεμαι
ἄκουσον. Ἀνθρώποισι τὰς μὲν ἐκ θεῶν
τύχας δοθείσας ἔστ’ ἀναγκαῖον φέρειν·
ὅσοι δ’ ἑκουσίοισιν ἔγκεινται βλάβαις,
ὥσπερ σύ, τούτοις οὔτε συγγνώμην ἔχειν
δίκαιόν ἐστιν οὔτ’ ἐποικτίρειν τινά.
Σὺ δ’ ἠγρίωσαι, κοὔτε σύμβουλον δέχῃ,
ἐάν τε νουθετῇ τις εὐνοίᾳ λέγων,
στυγεῖς πολέμιον δυσμενῆ θ’ ἡγούμενος.
Ὅμως δὲ λέξω· Ζῆνα δ’ ὅρκιον καλῶ·
καὶ ταῦτ’ ἐπίστω, καὶ γράφου φρενῶν ἔσω.

Σὺ γὰρ νοσεῖς τόδ’ ἄλγος ἐκ θείας τύχης,
Χρύσης πελασθεὶς φύλακος, ὃς τὸν ἀκαλυφῆ
σηκὸν φυλάσσει κρύφιος οἰκουρῶν ὄφις.
Καὶ παῦλαν ἴσθι τῆσδε μή ποτ’ ἂν τυχεῖν
1330 νόσου βαρείας, ἕως ἂν αὐτὸς ἥλιος
ταύτῃ μὲν αἴρῃ, τῇδε δ’ αὖ δύνῃ πάλιν,
πρὶν ἂν τὰ Τροίας πεδί’ ἑκὼν αὐτὸς μόλῃς,
καὶ τῶν παρ’ ἡμῖν ἐντυχὼν Ἀσκληπιδῶν
νόσου μαλαχθῇς τῆσδε, καὶ τὰ πέργαμα
1335 ξὺν τοῖσδε τόξοις ξύν τ’ ἐμοὶ πέρσας φανῇς.
Ὡς δ’ οἶδα ταῦτα τῇδ’ ἔχοντ’ ἐγὼ φράσω.
Ἀνὴρ γὰρ ἡμῖν ἔστιν ἐκ Τροίας ἁλούς,
Ἕλενος ἀριστόμαντις, ὃς λέγει σαφῶς
ὡς δεῖ γενέσθαι ταῦτα· καὶ πρὸς τοῖσδ’ ἔτι,
1340 ὡς ἔστ’ ἀνάγκη τοῦ παρεστῶτος θέρους
Τροίαν ἁλῶναι πᾶσαν· ἢ δίδωσ’ ἑκὼν
κτείνειν ἑαυτόν, ἢν τάδε ψευσθῇ λέγων.
Ταῦτ’ οὖν ἐπεὶ κάτοισθα, συγχώρει θέλων·
καλὴ γὰρ ἡ ‘πίκτησις, Ἑλλήνων ἕνα
1345 κριθέντ’ ἄριστον, τοῦτο μὲν παιωνίας
ἐς χεῖρας ἐλθεῖν, εἶτα τὴν πολύστονον
Τροίαν ἑλόντα κλέος ὑπέρτατον λαβεῖν.

ΦΙ. Ὦ στυγνὸς αἰών, τί μ’ ἔτι δῆτ’ ἔχεις ἄνω
βλέποντα κοὐκ ἀφῆκας εἰς Ἅιδου μολεῖν;
1350 Οἴμοι, τί δράσω; πῶς ἀπιστήσω λόγοις
τοῖς τοῦδ’ ὃς εὔνους ὢν ἐμοὶ παρῄνεσεν;
Ἀλλ’ εἰκάθω δῆτ’; εἶτα πῶς ὁ δύσμορος
εἰς φῶς τάδ’ ἔρξας εἶμι; τῷ προσήγορος;
Πῶς, ὦ τὰ πάντ’ ἰδόντες ἀμφ’ ἐμοὶ κύκλοι,
1355 ταῦτ’ ἐξανασχήσεσθε, τοῖσιν Ἀτρέως
ἐμὲ ξυνόντα παισίν, οἵ μ’ ἀπώλεσαν;
πῶς τῷ πανώλει παιδὶ τῷ Λαερτίου;
οὐ γάρ με τἄλγος τῶν παρελθόντων δάκνει,
ἀλλ’ οἷα χρὴ παθεῖν με πρὸς τούτων ἔτι
1360 δοκῶ προλεύσσειν· οἷς γὰρ ἡ γνώμη κακῶν

μήτηρ γένηται, τἄλλα παιδεύει κακά.
Καὶ σοῦ δ’ ἕγωγε θαυμάσας ἔχω τόδε·
χρῆν γάρ σε μήτ’ αὐτόν ποτ’ ἐς Τροίαν μολεῖν,
ἡμᾶς τ’ ἀπείργειν, οἵ γε σοῦ καθύβρισαν,
πατρὸς γέρας συλῶντες· εἶτα τοῖσδε σὺ
εἶ ξυμμαχήσων κἄμ’ ἀναγκάζεις τόδε;
Μὴ δῆτα, τέκνον· ἀλλ’, ἄ μοι ξυνώμοσας,
πέμψον πρὸς οἴκους, καὐτὸς ἐν Σκύρῳ μένων
ἔα κακῶς αὐτοὺς ἀπόλλυσθαι κακούς.
Χοὔτω διπλῆν μὲν ἐξ ἐμοῦ κτήσῃ χάριν,
διπλῆν δὲ πατρὸς κοὐ κακοὺς ἐπωφελῶν
δόξεις ὅμοιος τοῖς κακοῖς πεφυκέναι.

ΝΕ. Λέγεις μὲν εἰκότ’, ἀλλ’ ὅμως σε βούλομαι
θεοῖς τε πιστεύσαντα τοῖς τ’ ἐμοῖς λόγοις
φίλου μετ’ ἀνδρὸς τοῦδε τῆσδ’ ἐκπλεῖν χθονός.

ΦΙ. Ἦ πρὸς τὰ Τροίας πεδία καὶ τὸν Ἀτρέως
ἔχθιστον υἱὸν τῷδε δυστήνῳ ποδί;

ΝΕ. Πρὸς τοὺς μὲν οὖν σε τήνδε τ’ ἔμπυον βάσιν
παύσοντας ἄλγους κἀποσώσοντας νόσου.
ΦΙ. Ὦ δεινὸν αἶνον αἰνέσας, τί φῄς ποτε;

ΝΕ. Ἃ σοί τε κἀμοὶ λῷσθ’ ὁρῶ τελούμενα.

ΦΙ. Καὶ ταῦτα λέξας οὐ καταισχύνῃ θεούς;

ΝΕ. Πῶς γάρ τις αἰσχύνοιτ’ ἂν ὠφελούμενος;

ΦΙ. Λέγεις δ’ Ἀτρείδαις ὄφελος, ἢ ‘π’ ἐμοὶ τόδε;
1385 ΝΕ. Σοί που, φίλος γ’ ὤν, χὠ λόγος τοιόσδε μου.

ΦΙ. Πῶς, ὅς γε τοῖς ἐχθροῖσί μ’ ἐκδοῦναι θέλεις;

ΝΕ. Ὦ τᾶν, διδάσκου μὴ θρασύνεσθαι κακοῖς.

ΦΙ. Ὀλεῖς με, γιγνώσκω σε, τοῖσδε τοῖς λόγοις.

ΝΕ. Οὔκουν ἔγωγε· φημὶ δ’ οὔ σε μανθάνειν.
1390 ΦΙ. Ἐγὼ οὐκ Ἀτρείδας ἐκβαλόντας οἶδά με;

ΝΕ. Ἀλλ’ ἐκβαλόντες εἰ πάλιν σώσουσ’ ὅρα.

ΦΙ. Οὐδέποθ’ ἑκόντα γ’ ὥστε τὴν Τροίαν ἰδεῖν.

ΝΕ. Τί δῆτ’ ἂν ἡμεῖς δρῷμεν, εἰ σέ γ’ ἐν λόγοις
πείσειν δυνησόμεσθα μηδὲν ὧν λέγω;
1395 ὡς ῥᾷστ’ ἐμοὶ μὲν τῶν λόγων λῆξαι, σὲ δὲ
ζῆν, ὥσπερ ἤδη ζῇς, ἄνευ σωτηρίας.

ΦΙ. Ἔα με πάσχειν ταῦθ’ ἅπερ παθεῖν με δεῖ·
ἃ δ’ ἥνεσάς μοι δεξιᾶς ἐμῆς θιγών,
πέμπειν πρὸς οἴκους, ταῦτά μοι πρᾶξον, τέκνον,
1400 καὶ μὴ βράδυνε μηδ’ ἐπιμνησθῇς ἔτι
Τροίας· ἅλις γάρ μοι τεθρήνηται γόοις.

ΝΕ. Εἰ δοκεῖ, στείχωμεν.

ΦΙ. Ὦ γενναῖον εἰρηκὼς ἔπος.

ΝΕ. Ἀντέρειδε νῦν βάσιν σήν.

ΦΙ. Εἰς ὅσον γ’ ἐγὼ σθένω.

ΝΕ. Αἰτίαν δὲ πῶς Ἀχαιῶν φεύξομαι;

ΦΙ. Μὴ φροντίσῃς;

ΝΕ. Τί γάρ, ἐὰν πορθῶσι χώραν τὴν ἐμήν;

ΦΙ. Ἐγὼ παρὼν -

ΝΕ. Τίνα προσωφέλησιν ἔρξεις;

ΦΙ. βέλεσι τοῖς Ἡρακλέους -

ΝΕ. Πῶς λέγεις;

ΦΙ. εἴρξω πελάζειν.

ΝΕ. Στεῖχε προσκύσας χθόνα.

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ
Μήπω γε, πρὶν ἂν τῶν ἡμετέρων
ἀϊῇς μύθων, παῖ Ποίαντος·
φάσκειν δ’ αὐδὴν τὴν Ἡρακλέους
ἀκοῇ τε κλύειν λεύσσειν τ’ ὄψιν.
Τὴν σὴν δ’ ἥκω χάριν οὐρανίας
ἕδρας προλιπὼν
τὰ Διός τε φράσων βουλεύματά σοι
κατερητύσων θ’ ὁδὸν ἣν στέλλῃ·

σὺ δ’ ἐμῶν μύθων ἐπάκουσον.
Καὶ πρῶτα μέν σοι τὰς ἐμὰς λέξω τύχας,
ὅσους πονήσας καὶ διεξελθὼν πόνους
ἀθάνατον ἀρετὴν ἔσχον, ὡς πάρεσθ’ ὁρᾶν·
καὶ σοί, σάφ’ ἴσθι, τοῦτ’ ὀφείλεται παθεῖν,
ἐκ τῶν πόνων τῶνδ’ εὐκλεᾶ θέσθαι βίον.
Ἐλθὼν δὲ σὺν τῷδ’ ἀνδρὶ πρὸς τὸ Τρωϊκὸν
πόλισμα, πρῶτον μὲν νόσου παύσῃ λυγρᾶς,
ἀρετῇ τε πρῶτος ἐκκριθεὶς στρατεύματος,
Πάριν μέν, ὃς τῶνδ’ αἴτιος κακῶν ἔφυ,
τόξοισι τοῖς ἐμοῖσι νοσφιεῖς βίου,
πέρσεις τε Τροίαν, σκῦλά τ’ εἰς μέλαθρα σὰ
πέμψεις, ἀριστεῖ’ ἐκλαβὼν στρατεύματος,
Ποίαντι πατρὶ πρὸς πάτρας Οἴτης πλάκα.
Ἃ δ’ ἂν λάβῃς σὺ σκῦλα τοῦδε τοῦ στρατοῦ
τόξων ἐμῶν μνημεῖα πρὸς πυρὰν ἐμὴν
κόμιζε. Καὶ σοὶ ταῦτ’, Ἀχιλλέως τέκνον,
παρῄνεσ’· οὔτε γὰρ σὺ τοῦδ’ ἄτερ σθένεις
ἐλεῖν τὸ Τροίας πεδίον οὔθ’ οὗτος σέθεν·
ἀλλ’ ὡς λέοντε συννόμω φυλάσσετον
οὗτος σὲ καὶ σὺ τόνδ’. Ἐγὼ δ’ Ἀσκληπιὸν
παυστῆρα πέμψω σῆς νόσου πρὸς Ἴλιον·
τὸ δεύτερον γὰρ τοῖς ἐμοῖς αὐτὴν χρεὼν
τόξοις ἁλῶναι. Τοῦτο δ’ ἐννοεῖθ’, ὅταν
πορθῆτε γαῖαν, εὐσεβεῖν τὰ πρὸς θεούς·
ὡς τἄλλα πάντα δεύτερ’ ἡγεῖται πατὴρ
Ζεύς· οὐ γὰρ ηὐσέβεια συνθνῄσκει βροτοῖς,
κἂν ζῶσι κἂν θάνωσιν, οὐκ ἀπόλλυται.
ΦΙ. Ὦ φθέγμα ποθεινὸν ἐμοὶ πέμψας,
χρόνιός τε φανείς,
οὐκ ἀπιθήσω τοῖς σοῖς μύθοις.

ΝΕ. Κἀγὼ γνώμην ταύτῃ τίθεμαι.

ΗΡ. Μή νυν χρόνιοι μέλλετε πράσσειν.
Καιρὸς καὶ πλοῦς
ὅδ’ ἐπείγει γὰρ κατὰ πρύμνην.

ΦΙ. Φέρε νυν στείχων χώραν καλέσω.
χαῖρ’, ὦ μέλαθρον ξύμφρουρον ἐμοὶ
Νύμφαι τ’ ἔνυδροι λειμωνιάδες,
καὶ κτύπος ἄρσην πόντου προβλής ‹θ’›
οὖ πολλάκι δὴ τοὐμὸν ἐτέγχθη
κρᾶτ’ ἐνδόμυχον πληγῇσι νότου,
πολλὰ δὲ φωνῆς τῆς ἠμετέρας
Ἑρμαῖον ὄρος παρέπεμψεν ἐμοὶ
στόνον ἀντίτυπον χειμαζομένῳ.
Νῦν δ’, ὦ κρῆναι Λύκιόν τε ποτόν,
λείπομεν ὑμᾶς, λείπομεν ἤδη,
δόξης οὔ ποτε τῆσδ’ ἐπιβάντες.
Χαῖρ’, ὦ Λήμνου πέδον ἀμφίαλον,
καί μ’ εὐπλοίᾳ πέμψον ἀμέμπτως
ἔνθ’ ἡ μεγάλη Μοῖρα κομίζει
γνώμη τε φίλων, χὠ πανδαμάτωρ
δαίμων ὃς ταῦτ’ ἐπέκρανεν.

ΧΟ. Χωρῶμεν δὴ πάντες ἀολλεῖς,
Νύμφαις ἁλίαισιν ἐπευξάμενοι
νόστου σωτῆρας ἱκέσθαι.

Ηλέκτρα - ELECTRA

ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ
Ὦ τοῦ στρατηγήσαντος ἐν Τροίᾳ ποτὲ
Ἀγαμέμνονος παῖ, νῦν ἐκεῖν’ ἔξεστί σοι
παρόντι λεύσσειν ὧν πρόθυμος ἦσθ’ ἀεί.
Τὸ γὰρ παλαιὸν Ἄργος οὐπόθεις τόδε,
τῆς οἰστροπλῆγος ἄλσος Ἰνάχου κόρης·
αὕτη δ’, Ὀρέστα, τοῦ λυκοκτόνου θεοῦ
ἀγορὰ Λύκειος· οὐξ ἀριστερᾶς δ’ ὅδε
Ἥρας ὁ κλεινὸς ναός· οἳ δ’ ἱκάνομεν,
φάσκειν Μυκήνας τὰς πολυχρύσους ὁρᾶν,
πολύφθορόν τε δῶμα Πελοπιδῶν τόδε,
ὅθεν σε πατρὸς ἐκ φόνων ἐγώ ποτε
πρὸς σῆς ὁμαίμου καὶ κασιγνήτης λαβὼν
ἤνεγκα κἀξέσωσα κἀξεθρεψάμην
τοσόνδ’ ἐς ἥβης πατρὶ τιμωρὸν φόνου.
Νῦν οὖν, Ὀρέστα καὶ σύ, φίλτατε ξένων
Πυλάδη, τί χρὴ δρᾶν ἐν τάχει βουλευτέον,
ὡς ἡμὶν ἤδη λαμπρὸν ἡλίου σέλας
ἐῷα κινεῖ φθέγματ’ ὀρνίθων σαφῆ,
μέλαινά τ’ ἄστρων ἐκλέλοιπεν εὐφρόνη.
Πρὶν οὖν τιν’ ἀνδρῶν ἐξοδοιπορεῖν στέγης,
ξυνάπτετον λόγοισιν· ὡς ἐνταῦθ’ ἴμεν
ἵν’ οὐκέτ’ ὀκνεῖν καιρός, ἀλλ’ ἔργων ἀκμή.

ΟΡΕΣΤΗΣ
Ὦ φίλτατ’ ἀνδρῶν προσπόλων, ὥς μοι σαφῆ
σημεῖα φαίνεις ἐσθλὸς εἰς ἡμᾶς γεγώς·
ὥσπερ γὰρ ἵππος εὐγενής, κἂν ᾖ γέρων,
ἐν τοῖσι δεινοῖς θυμὸν οὐκ ἀπώλεσεν,
ἀλλ’ ὀρθὸν οὖς ἵστησιν, ὡσαύτως δὲ σὺ
ἡμᾶς τ’ ὀτρύνεις καὐτὸς ἐν πρώτοις ἔπῃ.
Τοιγὰρ τὰ μὲν δόξαντα δηλώσω, σὺ δέ,
ὀξεῖαν ἀκοὴν τοῖς ἐμοῖς λόγοις διδούς,

εἰ μή τι καιροῦ τυγχάνω, μεθάρμοσον.
Ἐγὼ γὰρ ἡνίχ᾽ ἱκόμην τὸ Πυθικὸν
μαντεῖον, ὡς μάθοιμ᾽ ὅτῳ τρόπῳ πατρὶ
δίκας ἀροίμην τῶν φονευσάντων πάρα,
χρῇ μοι τοιαῦθ᾽ ὁ Φοῖβος ὢν πεύσῃ τάχα·
ἄσκευον αὐτὸν ἀσπίδων τε καὶ στρατοῦ
δόλοισι κλέψαι χειρὸς ἐνδίκους σφαγάς.
Ὅτ᾽ οὖν τοιόνδε χρησμὸν εἰσηκούσαμεν,
σὺ μὲν μολών, ὅταν σε καιρὸς εἰσάγῃ
δόμων ἔσω τῶνδ᾽, ἴσθι πᾶν τὸ δρώμενον,
ὅπως ἂν εἰδὼς ἡμὶν ἀγγείλῃς σαφῆ·
οὐ γάρ σε μὴ γήρᾳ τε καὶ χρόνῳ μακρῷ
γνῶσ᾽, οὐδ᾽ ὑποπτεύσουσιν ὧδ᾽ ἠνθισμένον·
λόγῳ δὲ χρῶ τοιῷδ᾽, ὅτι ξένος μὲν εἶ
Φωκεὺς παρ᾽ ἀνδρὸς Φανοτέως ἥκων· ὁ γὰρ
μέγιστος αὐτοῖς τυγχάνει δορυξένων·
ἄγγελλε δ᾽, ὅρκον προστιθείς, ὀθούνεκα
τέθνηκ᾽ Ὀρέστης ἐξ ἀναγκαίας τύχης,
ἅθλοισι Πυθικοῖσιν ἐκ τροχηλάτων
δίφρων κυλισθείς· ὧδ᾽ ὁ μῦθος ἑστάτω.
Ἡμεῖς δὲ πατρὸς τύμβον, ὡς ἐφίετο,
λοιβαῖσι πρῶτον καὶ καρατόμοις χλιδαῖς
στέψαντες, εἶτ᾽ ἄψορρον ἥξομεν πάλιν,
τύπωμα χαλκόπλευρον ἡρμένοι χεροῖν,
ὃ καὶ σὺ θάμνοις οἶσθά μοι κεκρυμμένον,
ὅπως λόγῳ κλέπτοντες ἡδεῖαν φάτιν
φέροιμεν αὐτοῖς, τοὐμὸν ὡς ἔρρει δέμας
φλογιστὸν ἤδη καὶ κατηνθρακωμένον.
Τί γάρ με λυπεῖ τοῦθ᾽, ὅταν λόγῳ θανὼν
ἔργοισι σωθῶ κἀξενέγκωμαι κλέος;
δοκῶ μὲν οὐδὲν ῥῆμα σὺν κέρδει κακόν·
ἤδη γὰρ εἶδον πολλάκις καὶ τοὺς σοφοὺς
λόγῳ μάτην θνῄσκοντας· εἶθ᾽, ὅταν δόμους
ἔλθωσιν αὖθις, ἐκτετίμηνται πλέον·
ὡς κἄμ᾽ ἐπαυχῶ τῆσδε τῆς φήμης ἄπο
δεδορκότ᾽ ἐχθροῖς ἄστρον ὡς λάμψειν ἔτι.
Ἀλλ᾽, ὦ πατρῷα γῆ θεοί τ᾽ ἐγχώριοι,
δέξασθέ μ᾽ εὐτυχοῦντα ταῖσδε ταῖς ὁδοῖς,
σύ τ᾽, ὦ πατρῷον δῶμα· σοῦ γὰρ ἔρχομαι

δίκῃ καθαρτὴς πρὸς θεῶν ὡρμημένος·
καὶ μή μ’ ἄτιμον τῆσδ’ ἀποστείλητε γῆς,
ἀλλ’ ἀρχέπλουτον καὶ καταστάτην δόμων·
Εἴρηκα μέν νυν ταῦτα· σοὶ δ’ ἤδη, γέρον,
τὸ σὸν μελέσθω βάντι φρουρῆσαι χρέος·
νὼ δ’ ἔξιμεν· καιρὸς γάρ, ὅσπερ ἀνδράσι
μέγιστος ἔργου παντός ἐστ’ ἐπιστάτης.

ΗΛ. Ἰώ μοί μοι δύστηνος.

ΠΑ. Καὶ μὴν θυρῶν ἔδοξα προσπόλων τινὸς
ὑποστενούσης ἔνδον αἰσθέσθαι, τέκνον.
ΟΡ. Ἆρ’ ἐστὶν ἡ δύστηνος Ἠλέκτρα; θέλεις
μείνωμεν αὐτοῦ κἀνακούσωμεν γόων;

ΠΑ. Ἥκιστα· μηδὲν πρόσθεν ἢ τὰ Λοξίου
πειρώμεθ’ ἔρδειν, κἀπὸ τῶνδ’ ἀρχηγετεῖν
πατρὸς χέοντες λουτρά· ταῦτα γὰρ φέρει
νίκην τ’ ἐφ’ ἡμῖν καὶ κράτος τῶν δρωμένων.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΑ
Ὦ φάος ἀγνὸν
καὶ γῆς ἰσόμοιρ’ ἀήρ, ὥς μοι
πολλὰς μὲν θρήνων ᾠδάς,
πολλὰς δ’ ἀντήρεις ἤσθου
στέρνων πλαγὰς αἱμασσομένων,
ὁπόταν δνοφερὰ νὺξ ὑπολειφθῇ·
τὰ δὲ παννυχίδων ἤδη στυγεραὶ
ξυνίσασ’ εὐναὶ μογερῶν οἴκων,

ὅσα τὸν δύστηνον ἐμὸν θρηνῶ
πατέρ’, ὃν κατὰ μὲν βάρβαρον αἶαν
φοίνιος Ἄρης οὐκ ἐξένισεν,
μήτηρ δ’ ἡμὴ χὠ κοινολεχὴς
Αἴγισθος, ὅπως δρῦν ὑλοτόμοι,
σχίζουσι κάρα φονίῳ πελέκει·
κοὐδεὶς τούτων οἶκτος ἀπ’ ἄλλης
ἢ ‘μοῦ φέρεται, σοῦ, πάτερ, οὕτως
ἀδίκως οἰκτρῶς τε θανόντος.
Ἀλλ’ οὐ μὲν δὴ
λήξω θρήνων στυγερῶν τε γόων,
ἔστ’ ἂν παμφεγγεῖς ἄστρων
ῥιπάς, λεύσσω δὲ τόδ’ ἦμαρ,
μὴ οὐ τεκνολέτειρ’ ὡς τις ἀηδὼν
ἐπὶ κωκυτῷ τῶνδε πατρῴων
πρὸ θυρῶν ἠχὼ πᾶσι προφωνεῖν·
ὦ δῶμ’ Ἀΐδου καὶ Περσεφόνης,
ὦ χθόνι’ Ἑρμῆ καὶ πότνι’ Ἀρά,
σεμναί τε θεῶν παῖδες Ἐρινύες,
αἳ τοὺς ἀδίκως θνῄσκοντας ὁρᾶθ’,
αἳ τοὺς εὐνὰς ὑποκλεπτομένους,
ἔλθετ’, ἀρήξατε, τείσασθε πατρὸς
φόνον ἡμετέρου,
καί μοι τὸν ἐμὸν πέμψατ’ ἀδελφόν·
μούνη γὰρ ἄγειν οὐκέτι σωκῶ
λύπης ἀντίρροπον ἄχθος.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
Ὦ παῖ, παῖ δυστανοτάτας Str. 1 .
Ἠλέκτρα ματρός, τίν’ ἀεὶ
τάκεις ὧδ’ ἀκόρεστον οἰμωγὰν
τὸν πάλαι ἐκ δολερᾶς ἀθεώτατα
ματρὸς ἁλόντ’ ἀπάταις Ἀγαμέμνονα
κακᾷ τε χειρὶ πρόδοτον; ὡς ὁ τάδε πορὼν
ὄλοιτ’, εἴ μοι θέμις τάδ’ αὐδᾶν.

ΗΛ. Ὦ γενέθλα γενναίων,
ἥκετ’ ἐμῶν καμάτων παραμύθιον·
οἰδά τε καὶ ξυνίημι τάδ’, οὔ τί με
φυγγάνει· οὐδ’ ἐθέλω προλιπεῖν τόδε,
μὴ οὐ τὸν ἐμὸν στενάχειν πατέρ’ ἄθλιον.
Ἀλλ’, ὦ παντοίας φιλότητος ἀμειβόμεναι χάριν,
ἐᾶτέ μ’ ὧδ’ ἀλύειν,
αἰαῖ, ἱκνοῦμαι.

ΧΟ. Ἀλλ’ οὔτοι τόν γ’ ἐξ Ἀΐδα Ant. 1 .
παγκοίνου λίμνας πατέρ’ ἀν-
στάσεις οὔτε γόοισιν οὔτ’ ἄνταις.
Ἀλλ’ ἀπὸ τῶν μετρίων ἐπ’ ἀμήχανον
ἄλγος ἀεὶ στενάχουσα διόλλυσαι
ἐν οἷς ἀνάλυσίς ἐστιν οὐδεμία κακῶν·
τί μοι τῶν δυσφόρων ἐφίῃ;
ΗΛ. Νήπιος ὃς τῶν οἰκτρῶς
οἰχομένων γονέων ἐπιλάθεται·
ἀλλ’ ἐμέ γ’ ἃ στονόεσσ’ ἄραρεν φρένας,
ἃ Ἴτυν, αἰὲν Ἴτυν ὀλοφύρεται,
ὄρνις ἀτυζομένα, Διὸς ἄγγελος.
Ἰὼ παντλάμων Νιόβα, σὲ δ’ ἔγωγε νέμω θεόν,
ἄτ’ ἐν τάφῳ πετραίῳ,
αἰαῖ, δακρύεις.

ΧΟ. Οὔτοι σοὶ μούνᾳ, τέκνον, Str. 2 .
ἄχος ἐφάνη βροτῶν,
πρὸς ὅ τι σὺ τῶν ἔνδον εἶ περισσά,
οἷς ὁμόθεν εἶ καὶ γονᾷ ξύναιμος,
οἵα Χρυσόθεμις ζώει καὶ Ἰφιάνασσα,
κρυπτᾷ τ’ ἀχέων ἐν ἥβᾳ
ὄλβιος, ὃν ἃ κλεινὰ
γᾶ ποτε Μυκηναίων

δέξεται εὐπατρίδαν, Διὸς εὔφρονι
λήματι μολόντα τάνδε γᾶν Ὀρέσταν.

ΗΛ. Ὅν γ’ ἐγὼ ἀκάματα προσμένουσ’, ἄτεκνος,
τάλαιν’, ἀνύμφευτος, αἰὲν οἰχνῶ,
δάκρυσι μυδαλέα, τὸν ἀνήνυτον
οἶτον ἔχουσα κακῶν· ὁ δὲ λάθεται
ὧν τ’ ἔπαθ’ ὧν τ’ ἐδάη· τί γὰρ οὐκ ἐμοὶ
ἔρχεται ἀγγελίας ἀπατώμενον;
ἀεὶ μὲν γὰρ ποθεῖ,
ποθῶν δ’ οὐκ ἀξιοῖ φανῆναι.

ΧΟ. Θάρσει μοι, θάρσει, τέκνον· Ant. 2 .
ἔτι μέγας οὐρανῷ
Ζεύς, ὃς ἐφορᾷ πάντα καὶ κρατύνει·
ᾧ τὸν ὑπεραλγῆ χόλον νέμουσα,
μήθ’ οἷς ἐχθαίρεις ὑπεράχθεο μήτ’ ἐπιλάθου.
Χρόνος γὰρ εὐμαρὴς θεός·
οὔτε γὰρ ὁ τὰν Κρῖσαν
βούνομον ἔχων ἀκτὰν
παῖς Ἀγαμεμνονίδας ἀπερίτροπος,
οὔθ’ ὁ παρὰ τὸν Ἀχέροντα θεὸς ἀνάσσων.
ΗΛ. Ἀλλ’ ἐμὲ μὲν ὁ πολὺς ἀπολέλοιπεν ἤδη
βίοτος ἀνέλπιστος, οὐδ’ ἔτ’ ἀρκῶ·
ἄτις ἄνευ τοκέων κατατάκομαι,
ἇς φίλος οὔτις ἀνὴρ ὑπερίσταται,
ἀλλ’ ἀπερεί τις ἔποικος ἀναξία
οἰκονομῶ θαλάμους πατρός, ὧδε μὲν
ἀεικεῖ σὺν στολᾷ,
κεναῖς δ’ ἀμφίσταμαι τραπέζαις.

ΧΟ. Οἰκτρὰ μὲν νόστοις αὐδά, Str. 3 .

οἰκτρὰ δ’ ἐν κοίταις πατρῴαις,
ὅτε οἱ παγχάλκων ἀνταία
γενύων ὠρμάθη πλαγά.
Δόλος ἦν ὁ φράσας, ἔρος ὁ κτείνας,
δεινὰν δεινῶς προφυτεύσαντες
μορφάν, εἴτ’ οὖν θεὸς εἴτε βροτῶν
ἦν ὁ ταῦτα πράσσων.

ΗΛ. Ὦ πασᾶν κείνα πλέον ἀμέρα
ἐλθοῦσ’ ἐχθίστα δή μοι·
ὦ νύξ, ὦ δείπνων ἀρρήτων
ἔκπαγλ’ ἄχθη·
τοὺς ἐμοὺς ἴδε πατὴρ
θανάτους αἰκεῖς διδύμαιν χειροῖν,
αἳ τὸν ἐμὸν εἷλον βίον
πρόδοτον, αἵ μ’ ἀπώλεσαν·
οἷς θεὸς ὁ μέγας Ὀλύμπιος
ποίνιμα πάθεα παθεῖν πόροι,
μηδέ ποτ’ ἀγλαΐας ἀπονα ίατο
τοιάδ’ ἀνύσαντες ἔργα.

ΧΟ. Φράζου μὴ πόρσω φωνεῖν· Ant. 3 .
οὐ γνώμαν ἴσχεις ἐξ οἵων
τὰ παρόντ’ οἰκείας εἰς ἄτας
ἐμπίπτεις οὕτως αἰκῶς;
Πολὺ γάρ τι κακῶν ὑπερεκτήσω,
σᾷ δυσθύμῳ τίκτουσ’ αἰεὶ
ψυχᾷ πολέμους· τὰ δὲ τοῖς δυνατοῖς
οὐκ ἐριστὰ πλάθειν.

ΗΛ. Δεινοῖς ἠναγκάσθην, δεινοῖς·
ἔξοιδ’, οὐ λάθει μ’ ὀργά.

Ἀλλ’ - ἐν γὰρ δεινοῖς οὐ σχήσω
ταύτας ἄτας,
ὄφρα με βίος ἔχῃ·
τίνι γάρ ποτ’ ἄν, ὦ φιλία γενέθλα,
πρόσφορον ἀκούσαιμ’ ἔπος,
τίνι φρονοῦντι καίρια;
ἄνετέ μ’, ἄνετε, παράγοροι·
τάδε γὰρ ἄλυτα κεκλήσεται·
οὐδέ ποτ’ ἐκ καμάτων ἀποπαύσομαι
ἀνάριθμος ὧδε θρήνων.

ΧΟ. Ἀλλ’ οὖν εὐνοίᾳ γ’ αὐδῶ, Epode.
μάτηρ ὡσεί τις πιστά,
μὴ τίκτειν σ’ ἄταν ἄταις.

ΗΛ. Καὶ τί μέτρον κακότατος ἔφυ; φέρε,
πῶς ἐπὶ τοῖς φθιμένοις ἀμελεῖν καλόν;
ἐν τίνι τοῦτ’ ἔβλαστ’ ἀνθρώπων;
Μήτ’ εἴην ἔντιμος τούτοις,
μήτ’, εἴ τῳ πρόσκειμαι χρηστῷ,
ξυνναίοιμ’ εὔκηλος, γονέων
ἐκτίμους ἴσχουσα πτέρυγας
ὀξυτόνων γόων.
Εἰ γὰρ ὁ μὲν θανὼν γᾶ τε καὶ οὐδὲν ὢν
κείσεται τάλας, οἱ δὲ μὴ πάλιν
δώσουσ’ ἀντιφόνους δίκας,
ἔρροι τ’ ἂν αἰδὼς ἀπάν-
των τ’ εὐσέβεια θνατῶν.

ΧΟ. Ἐγὼ μέν, ὦ παῖ, καὶ τὸ σὸν σπεύδουσ’ ἅμα
καὶ τοὐμὸν αὐτῆς ἦλθον· εἰ δὲ μὴ καλῶς
λέγω, σὺ νίκα· σοὶ γὰρ ἐψόμεσθ’ ἅμα.

ΗΛ. Αἰσχύνομαι μέν, ὦ γυναῖκες, εἰ δοκῶ
πολλοῖσι θρήνοις δυσφορεῖν ὑμῖν ἄγαν·
ἀλλ’ ἡ βία γὰρ ταῦτ’ ἀναγκάζει με δρᾶν,
σύγγνωτε· πῶς γὰρ ἥτις εὐγενὴς γυνή,
πατρῷ’ ὁρῶσα πήματ’, οὐ δρῴη τάδ’ ἄν,
ἀγὼ κατ’ ἦμαρ καὶ κατ’ εὐφρόνην ἀεὶ
θάλλοντα μᾶλλον ἢ καταφθίνονθ’ ὁρῶ;
ᾗ πρῶτα μὲν τὰ μητρὸς ἥ μ’ ἐγείνατο
ἔχθιστα συμβέβηκεν· εἶτα δώμασιν
ἐν τοῖς ἐμαυτῆς τοῖς φονεῦσι τοῦ πατρὸς
ξύνειμι, κἀκ τῶνδ’ ἄρχομαι, κἀκ τῶνδέ μοι
λαβεῖν θ’ ὁμοίως καὶ τὸ τητᾶσθαι πέλει.
Ἔπειτα ποίας ἡμέρας δοκεῖς μ’ ἄγειν,
ὅταν θρόνοις Αἴγισθον ἐνθακοῦντ’ ἴδω
τοῖσιν πατρῴοις, εἰσίδω δ’ ἐσθήματα
φοροῦντ’ ἐκείνῳ ταὐτὰ καὶ παρεστίους
σπένδοντα λοιβὰς ἔνθ’ ἐκεῖνον ὤλεσεν;
ἴδω δὲ τούτων τὴν τελευταίαν ὕβριν,
τὸν αὐτοφόντην ἡμὶν ἐν κοίτῃ πατρὸς
ξὺν τῇ ταλαίνῃ μητρί, μητέρ’ εἰ χρεὼν
ταύτην προσαυδᾶν τῷδε συγκοιμωμένην.
Ἦ δ’ ὧδε τλήμων ὥστε τῷ μιάστορι
ξύνεστ’, Ἐρινὺν οὔτιν’ ἐκφοβουμένη·
ἀλλ’ ὥσπερ ἐγγελῶσα τοῖς πρίν, οὐρανοῦσ’ ἐκείνην ἡμέραν ἐν ᾗ τότε
πατέρα τὸν ἀμὸν ἐκ δόλου κατέκτανεν,
ταύτῃ χοροὺς ἵστησι καὶ μηλοσφαγεῖ
θεοῖσιν ἔμμην’ ἱερὰ τοῖς σωτηρίοις.
Ἐγὼ δ’ ὁρῶσ’ ἡ δύσμορος κατὰ στέγας
κλαίω, τέτηκα, κἀπικωκύω πατρὸς
τὴν δυστάλαιναν δαῖτ’ ἐπωνομασμένην
αὐτὴ πρὸς αὑτήν· οὐδὲ γὰρ κλαῦσαι πάρα
τοσόνδ’ ὅσον μοι θυμὸς ἡδονὴν φέρει.
Αὕτη γὰρ ἡ λόγοισι γενναία γυνὴ
φωνοῦσα τοιάδ’ ἐξονειδίζει κακά·
“Ὦ δύσθεον μίσημα, σοὶ μόνῃ πατὴρ

τέθνηκεν; ἄλλος δ’ οὔτις ἐν πένθει βροτῶν;
κακῶς ὄλοιο, μηδέ σ’ ἐκ γόων ποτὲ
τῶν νῦν ἀπαλλάξειαν οἱ κάτω θεοί.”
Τάδ’ ἐξυβρίζει, πλὴν ὅταν κλύῃ τινὸς
ἥξοντ’ Ὀρέστην, τηνικαῦτα δ’ ἐμμανὴς
βοᾷ παραστᾶσ’· “Οὐ σύ μοι τῶνδ’ αἰτία;
οὐ σὸν τόδ’ ἐστὶ τοὔργον, ἥτις ἐκ χερῶν
κλέψασ’ Ὀρέστην τῶν ἐμῶν ὑπεξέθου;
ἀλλ’ ἴσθι τοι τείσουσά γ’ ἀξίαν δίκην.”
Τοιαῦθ’ ὑλακτεῖ, σὺν δ’ ἐποτρύνει πέλας
ὁ κλεινὸς αὐτῇ ταῦτα νυμφίος παρών,
ὁ πάντ’ ἄναλκις οὗτος, ἡ πᾶσα βλάβη,
ὁ σὺν γυναιξὶ τὰς μάχας ποιούμενος.
Ἐγὼ δ’, Ὀρέστην τῶνδε προσμένουσ’ ἀεὶ
παυστῆρ’ ἐφήξειν, ἡ τάλαιν’ ἀπόλλυμαι·
μέλλων γὰρ αἰεὶ δρᾶν τι τὰς οὔσας τέ μου
καὶ τὰς ἀπούσας ἐλπίδας διέφθορεν.
Ἐν οὖν τοιούτοις οὔτε σωφρονεῖν, φίλαι,
οὔτ’ εὐσεβεῖν πάρεστιν· ἀλλ’ ἐν τοῖς κακοῖς
πολλή ‘στ’ ἀνάγκη κἀπιτηδεύειν κακά.
ΧΟ. Φέρ’ εἰπέ, πότερον ὄντος Αἰγίσθου πέλας
λέγεις τάδ’ ἡμῖν, ἢ βεβῶτος ἐκ δόμων;

ΗΛ. Ἧ κάρτα· μὴ δόκει μ’ ἄν, εἴπερ ἦν πέλας,
θυραῖον οἰχνεῖν· νῦν δ’ ἀγροῖσι τυγχάνει.

ΧΟ. Ἧ κἂν ἐγὼ θαρσοῦσα μᾶλλον ἐς λόγους
τοὺς σοὺς ἱκοίμην, εἴπερ ὧδε ταῦτ’ ἔχει.

ΗΛ. Ὡς νῦν ἀπόντος ἱστόρει τί σοι φίλον.

ΧΟ. Καὶ δή σ’ ἐρωτῶ. Τοῦ κασιγνήτου τί φῄς,
ἥξοντος ἢ μέλλοντος; εἰδέναι θέλω.

ΗΛ. Φησίν γε· φάσκων δ’ οὐδὲν ὧν λέγει ποεῖ.
ΧΟ. Φιλεῖ γὰρ ὀκνεῖν πρᾶγμ’ ἀνὴρ πράσσων μέγα.

ΗΛ. Καὶ μὴν ἔγωγ’ ἔσωσ’ ἐκεῖνον οὐκ ὄκνῳ.

ΧΟ. Θάρσει· πέφυκεν ἐσθλὸς ὥστ’ ἀρκεῖν φίλοις.

ΗΛ. Πέποιθ’, ἐπεί τἂν οὐ μακρὰν ἔζων ἐγώ.

ΧΟ. Μὴ νῦν ἔτ’ εἴπῃς μηδέν· ὡς δόμων ὀρῶ
τὴν σὴν ὅμαιμον, ἐκ πατρὸς ταὐτοῦ φύσιν,
Χρυσόθεμιν, ἔκ τε μητρός, ἐντάφια χεροῖν
φέρουσαν, οἷα τοῖς κάτω νομίζεται.

ΧΡΥΣΟΘΕΜΙΣ
Τίν’ αὖ σὺ τήνδε πρὸς θυρῶνος ἐξόδοις
ἐλθοῦσα φωνεῖς, ὦ κασιγνήτη, φάτιν,
κοὐδ’ ἐν χρόνῳ μακρῷ διδαχθῆναι θέλεις
θυμῷ ματαίῳ μὴ χαρίζεσθαι κενά;
Καίτοι τοσοῦτόν γ’ οἶδα κἀμαυτὴν ὅτι
ἀλγῶ ‘πὶ τοῖς παροῦσιν· ὥστ’ ἄν, εἰ σθένος

λάβοιμι, δηλώσαιμ’ ἂν οἷ’ αὐτοῖς φρονῶ·
νῦν δ’ ἐν κακοῖς μοι πλεῖν ὑφειμένῃ δοκεῖ,
καὶ μὴ δοκεῖν μὲν δρᾶν τι, πημαίνειν δὲ μή·
τοιαῦτα δ’ ἄλλα καὶ σὲ βούλομαι ποεῖν.
Καίτοι τὸ μὲν δίκαιον οὐχ ᾗ ‘γὼ λέγω,
ἀλλ’ ᾗ σὺ κρίνεις· εἰ δ’ ἐλευθέραν με δεῖ
ζῆν, τῶν κρατούντων ἐστὶ πάντ’ ἀκουστέα·

ΗΛ. Δεινόν γέ σ’ οὖσαν πατρὸς οὗ σὺ παῖς ἔφυς
κείνου λελῆσθαι, τῆς δὲ τικτούσης μέλειν.
Ἅπαντα γάρ σοι τἀμὰ νουθετήματα
κείνης διδακτὰ κοὐδὲν ἐκ σαυτῆς λέγεις.
Ἔπειθ’ ἑλοῦ γε θάτερ’, ἢ φρονεῖν κακῶς,
ἢ τῶν φίλων φρονοῦσα μὴ μνήμην ἔχειν·
ἥτις λέγεις μὲν ἀρτίως ὡς, εἰ λάβοις
σθένος, τὸ τούτων μῖσος ἐκδείξειας ἄν·
ἐμοῦ δὲ πατρὶ πάντα τιμωρουμένης
οὔτε ξυνέρδεις τήν τε δρῶσαν ἐκτρέπεις·
οὐ ταῦτα πρὸς κακοῖσι δειλίαν ἔχει;
Ἐπεὶ δίδαξον, ἢ μάθ’ ἐξ ἐμοῦ, τί μοι
κέρδος γένοιτ’ ἂν τῶνδε ληξάσῃ γόων.
Οὐ ζῶ; κακῶς μέν, οἶδ’, ἐπαρκούντως δ’ ἐμοί·
λυπῶ δὲ τούτους, ὥστε τῷ τεθνηκότι
τιμὰς προσάπτειν, εἴ τις ἔστ’ ἐκεῖ χάρις.
Σὺ δ’ ἡμὶν ἡ μισοῦσα μισεῖς μὲν λόγῳ,
ἔργῳ δὲ τοῖς φονεῦσι τοῦ πατρὸς ξύνει.
Ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν οὐκ ἄν ποτ’, οὐδ’ εἴ μοι τὰ σὰ
μέλλοι τις οἴσειν δῶρ’, ἐφ’ οἷσι νῦν χλιδᾷς,
τούτοις ὑπεικάθοιμι· σοὶ δὲ πλουσία
τράπεζα κείσθω καὶ περιρρείτω βίος·
ἐμοὶ γὰρ ἔστω τοὐμὲ μὴ λυπεῖν μόνον
βόσκημα· τῆς σῆς δ’ οὐκ ἐρῶ τιμῆς τυχεῖν,
οὐδ’ ἂν σύ, σώφρων γ’ οὖσα. Νῦν δ’ ἐξὸν πατρὸς
πάντων ἀρίστου παῖδα κεκλῆσθαι, καλοῦ
τῆς μητρός· οὕτω γὰρ φανῇ πλείστοις κακή,
θανόντα πατέρα καὶ φίλους προδοῦσα σούς.

ΧΟ. Μηδὲν πρὸς ὀργήν, πρὸς θεῶν· ὡς τοῖς λόγοις
ἔνεστιν ἀμφοῖν κέρδος, εἰ σὺ μὲν μάθοις
τοῖς τῆσδε χρῆσθαι, τοῖς δὲ σοῖς αὖτη πάλιν.

ΧΡ. Ἐγὼ μέν, ὦ γυναῖκες, ἠθάς εἰμί πως
τῶν τῆσδε μύθων· οὐδ’ ἂν ἐμνήσθην ποτέ,
εἰ μὴ κακὸν μέγιστον εἰς αὐτὴν ἰὸν
ἤκουσ’, ὃ ταύτην τῶν μακρῶν σχήσει γόων.

ΗΛ. Φέρ’ εἰπὲ δὴ τὸ δεινόν· εἰ γὰρ τῶνδέ μοι
μεῖζόν τι λέξεις, οὐκ ἂν ἀντείποιμ’ ἔτι.

ΧΡ. Ἀλλ’ ἐξερῶ σοι πᾶν ὅσον κάτοιδ’ ἐγώ·
μέλλουσι γάρ σ’, εἰ τῶνδε μὴ λήξεις γόων,
ἐνταῦθα πέμψειν ἔνθα μήποθ’ ἡλίου
φέγγος προσόψει, ζῶσα δ’ ἐν κατηρεφεῖ
στέγῃ χθονὸς τῆσδ’ ἐκτὸς ὑμνήσεις κακά.
Πρὸς ταῦτα φράζου καί με μή ποθ’ ὕστερον
παθοῦσα μέμψῃ· νῦν γὰρ ἐν καλῷ φρονεῖν.
ΗΛ. Ἦ ταῦτα δή με καὶ βεβούλευνται ποεῖν;

ΧΡ. Μάλισθ’· ὅταν περ οἵκαδ’ Αἴγισθος μόλῃ.

ΗΛ. Ἀλλ’ ἐξίκοιτο τοῦδέ γ’ οὕνεκ’ ἐν τάχει.

ΧΡ. Τίν’, ὦ τάλαινα, τόνδ’ ἐπηράσω λόγον;

ΗΛ. Ἐλθεῖν ἐκεῖνον, εἴ τι τῶνδε δρᾶν νοεῖ.
390 ΧΡ. Ὅπως πάθῃς τί χρῆμα; ποῦ ποτ’ εἶ φρενῶν;

ΗΛ. Ὅπως ἀφ’ ὑμῶν ὡς προσώτατ’ ἐκφύγω.

ΧΡ. Βίου δὲ τοῦ παρόντος οὐ μνείαν ἔχεις;

ΗΛ. Καλὸς γὰρ οὑμὸς βίοτος ὥστε θαυμάσαι.

ΧΡ. Ἀλλ’ ἦν ἄν, εἰ σύ γ’ εὖ φρονεῖν ἠπίστασο.
395 ΗΛ. Μή μ’ ἐκδίδασκε τοῖς φίλοις εἶναι κακήν.

ΧΡ. Ἀλλ’ οὐ διδάσκω· τοῖς κρατοῦσι δ’ εἰκαθεῖν.

ΗΛ. Σὺ ταῦτα θώπευ’· οὐκ ἐμοὺς τρόπους λέγεις.

ΧΡ. Καλόν γε μέντοι μὴ ‘ξ ἀβουλίας πεσεῖν.

ΗΛ. Πεσούμεθ’, εἰ χρή, πατρὶ τιμωρούμενοι.
ΧΡ. Πατὴρ δὲ τούτων, οἶδα, συγγνώμην ἔχει.

ΗΛ. Ταῦτ’ ἐστὶ τἄπη πρὸς κακῶν ἐπαινέσαι.

ΧΡ. Σὺ δ’ οὐχὶ πείσῃ καὶ συναινέσεις ἐμοί;

ΗΛ. Οὐ δῆτα· μή πω νοῦ τοσόνδ’ εἴην κενή.

ΧΡ. Χωρήσομαι τἄρ’ οἷπερ ἐστάλην ὁδοῦ.
ΗΛ. Ποῖ δ’ ἐμπορεύῃ; τῷ φέρεις τάδ’ ἔμπυρα;

ΧΡ. Μήτηρ με πέμπει πατρὶ τυμβεῦσαι χοάς.

ΗΛ. Πῶς εἶπας; ἦ τῷ δυσμενεστάτῳ βροτῶν;

ΧΡ. Ὃν ἔκταν’ αὐτή· τοῦτο γὰρ λέξαι θέλεις.

ΗΛ. Ἐκ τοῦ φίλων πεισθεῖσα; τῷ τοῦτ’ ἤρεσεν;
ΧΡ. Ἐκ δείματός του νυκτέρου, δοκεῖν ἐμοί.

ΗΛ. Ὦ θεοὶ πατρῷοι, συγγένεσθέ γ’ ἀλλὰ νῦν.

ΧΡ. Ἔχεις τι θάρσος τοῦδε τοῦ τάρβους πέρι;

ΗΛ. Εἴ μοι λέγεις τὴν ὄψιν, εἴποιμ’ ἂν τότε.

ΧΡ. Ἀλλ’ οὐ κάτοιδα πλὴν ἐπὶ σμικρὸν φράσαι.
ΗΛ. Λέγ’ ἀλλὰ τοῦτο· πολλά τοι σμικροὶ λόγοι
ἔσφηλαν ἤδη καὶ κατώρθωσαν βροτούς.

ΧΡ. Λόγος τις αὐτήν ἐστιν εἰσιδεῖν πατρὸς
τοῦ σοῦ τε κἀμοῦ δευτέραν ὁμιλίαν
ἐλθόντος ἐς φῶς· εἶτα τόνδ’ ἐφέστιον
πῆξαι λαβόντα σκῆπτρον οὐφόρει ποτὲ
αὐτός, τανῦν δ’ Αἴγισθος· ἐκ δὲ τοῦδ’ ἄνω
βλαστεῖν βρύοντα θαλλὸν ᾧ κατάσκιον
πᾶσαν γενέσθαι τὴν Μυκηναίων χθόνα.
Τοιαῦτά του παρόντος, ἡνίχ’ Ἡλίῳ
δείκνυσι τοὔναρ, ἔκλυον ἐξηγουμένου·
πλείω δὲ τούτων οὐ κάτοιδα, πλὴν ὅτι
πέμπει μ’ ἐκείνη τοῦδε τοῦ φόβου χάριν.

Πρός νυν θεῶν σε λίσσομαι τῶν ἐγγενῶν
ἐμοὶ πιθέσθαι μηδ’ ἀβουλίᾳ πεσεῖν·
430 εἰ γάρ μ’ ἀπώσῃ, σὺν κακῷ μέτει πάλιν.

ΗΛ. Ἀλλ’, ὦ φίλη, τούτων μὲν ὧν ἔχεις χεροῖν
τύμβῳ προσάψῃς μηδέν· οὐ γάρ σοι θέμις
οὐδ’ ὅσιον ἐχθρᾶς ἀπὸ γυναικὸς ἱστάναι
κτερίσματ’ οὐδὲ λουτρὰ προσφέρειν πατρί·
435 ἀλλ’ ἢ πνοαῖσιν ἢ βαθυσκαφεῖ κόνει
κρύψον νιν, ἔνθα μή ποτ’ εἰς εὐνὴν πατρὸς
τούτων πρόσεισι μηδέν· ἀλλ’ ὅταν θάνῃ,
κειμήλι’ αὐτῇ ταῦτα σῳζέσθω κάτω.
Ἀρχὴν δ’ ἄν, εἰ μὴ τλημονεστάτη γυνὴ
440 πασῶν ἔβλαστε, τάσδε δυσμενεῖς χοὰς
οὐκ ἄν ποθ’, ὅν γ’ ἔκτεινε, τῷδ’ ἐπέστεφε.
Σκέψαι γὰρ εἴ σοι προσφιλῶς αὐτῇ δοκεῖ
γέρα τάδ’ οὖν τάφοισι δέξεσθαι νέκυς,
ὑφ’ ἧς θανὼν ἄτιμος ὥστε δυσμενὴς
445 ἐμασχαλίσθη, κἀπὶ λουτροῖσιν κάρᾳ
κηλῖδας ἐξέμαξεν· ἆρα μὴ δοκεῖς
λυτήρι’ αὐτῇ ταῦτα τοῦ φόνου φέρειν;
Οὐκ ἔστιν· ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν μέθες· σὺ δέ,
τεμοῦσα κρατὸς βοστρύχων ἄκρας φόβας
450 κἀμοῦ ταλαίνης, σμικρὰ μὲν τάδ’, ἀλλ’ ὅμως
ἄχω, δὸς αὐτῷ τήνδε λιπαρῆ τρίχα
καὶ ζῶμα τοὐμὸν οὐ χλιδαῖς ἠσκημένον·
αἰτοῦ δὲ προσπίτνουσα γῆθεν εὐμενῆ
ἡμῖν ἀρωγὸν αὐτὸν εἰς ἐχθροὺς μολεῖν,
455 καὶ παῖδ’ Ὀρέστην ἐξ ὑπερτέρας χερὸς
ἐχθροῖσιν αὐτοῦ ζῶντ’ ἐπεμβῆναι ποδί,
ὅπως τὸ λοιπὸν αὐτὸν ἀφνεωτέραις
χερσὶ στέφωμεν ἢ τανῦν δωρούμεθα.
Οἶμαι μὲν οὖν, οἶμαί τι κἀκείνῳ μέλον
460 πέμψαι τάδ’ αὐτῇ δυσπρόσοπτ’ ὀνείρατα.
Ὅμως δ’, ἀδελφή, σοί θ’ ὑπούργησον τάδε
ἐμοί τ’ ἀρωγὰ τῷ τε φιλτάτῳ βροτῶν

πάντων ἐν Ἅιδου κειμένῳ κοινῷ πατρί.

ΧΟ. Πρὸς εὐσέβειαν ἡ κόρη λέγει· σὺ δέ,
εἰ σωφρονήσεις, ὦ φίλη, δράσεις τάδε.

ΧΡ. Δράσω· τὸ γὰρ δίκαιον οὐκ ἔχει λόγον
δυοῖν ἐρίζειν, ἀλλ’ ἐπισπεύδειν τὸ δρᾶν.
Πειρωμένῃ δὲ τῶνδε τῶν ἔργων ἐμοὶ
σιγὴ παρ’ ὑμῶν, πρὸς θεῶν, ἔστω, φίλαι·
ὡς εἰ τάδ’ ἡ τεκοῦσα πεύσεται, πικρὰν
δοκῶ με πεῖραν τήνδε τολμήσειν ἔτι.

ΧΟ. Εἰ μὴ ‘γὼ παράφρων μάντις ἔφυν καὶ γνώ-Str.
μας λειπομένα σοφᾶς,
εἶσιν ἁ πρόμαντις,
Δίκα δίκαια φερομένα χεροῖν κράτη·
μέτεισιν, ὦ τέκνον, οὐ μακροῦ χρόνου.
Ὕπεστί μοι θράσος,
ἀδυπνόων κλύουσαν ἀρτίως ὀνειράτων.
Οὐ γάρ ποτ’ ἀμναστεῖ γ’ ὁ φύσας Ἑλλάνων ἄναξ,
οὐδ’ ἁ παλαιὰ χαλκόπλακτος ἀμφάκης γένυς,
ἅ νιν κατέπεφνεν αἰσχίσταις ἐν αἰκίαις.
Ἥξει καὶ πολύπους καὶ πολύχειρ ἁ δει-Ant.
νοῖς κρυπτομένα λόχοις
χαλκόπους Ἐρινύς.
Ἄλεκτρ’, ἄνυμφα γὰρ ἐπέβα μιαιφόνων
γάμων ἀμιλλήμαθ’ οἷσιν οὐ θέμις.
Πρὸ τῶνδέ τοί μ’ ἔχει
μήποτε μήποθ’ ἡμὶν ἀψεγὲς πελᾶν τέρας
τοῖς δρῶσι καὶ συνδρῶσιν. Ἦ τοι μαντεῖαι βροτῶν
οὐκ εἰσὶν ἐν δεινοῖς ὀνείροις οὐδ’ ἐν θεσφάτοις,
εἰ μὴ τόδε φάσμα νυκτὸς εὖ κατασχήσει.

Ὦ Πέλοπος ἀ πρόσθεν πολύπονος ἱππεία, Epode.
ὡς ἔμολες αἰανὴς τᾷδε γᾷ.
Εὖτε γὰρ ὁ ποντισθεὶς Μυρτίλος ἐκοιμάθη,
510 παγχρύσων δίφρων
δυστάνοις αἰκίαις
πρόρριζος ἐκριφθείς, οὔ τί πω
515 ἔλειπεν ἐκ τοῦδ’ οἴκους πολύπονος αἰκία.

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ
Ἀνειμένη μέν, ὡς ἔοικας, αὖ στρέφῃ.
Οὐ γὰρ πάρεστ’ Αἴγισθος, ὅς σ’ ἐπεῖχ’ ἀεὶ
μή τοι θυραίαν γ’ οὖσαν αἰσχύνειν φίλους·
νῦν δ’, ὡς ἄπεστ’ ἐκεῖνος, οὐδὲν ἐντρέπῃ
520 ἐμοῦ γε· καίτοι πολλὰ πρὸς πολλούς με δὴ
ἐξεῖπας ὡς θρασεῖα καὶ πέρα δίκης
ἄρχω, καθυβρίζουσα καὶ σὲ καὶ τὰ σά.
Ἐγὼ δ’ ὕβριν μὲν οὐκ ἔχω, κακῶς δέ σε
λέγω κακῶς κλύουσα πρὸς σέθεν θαμά.
525 Πατὴρ γάρ, οὐδὲν ἄλλο, σοὶ πρόσχημ’ ἀεὶ
ὡς ἐξ ἐμοῦ τέθνηκεν· ἐξ ἐμοῦ, καλῶς
ἔξοιδα· τῶνδ’ ἄρνησις οὐκ ἔνεστί μοι·
ἡ γὰρ Δίκη νιν εἶλεν, οὐκ ἐγὼ μόνη,
ᾗ χρῆν σ’ ἀρήγειν, εἰ φρονοῦσ’ ἐτύγχανες·
530 ἐπεὶ πατὴρ οὗτος σὸς ὃν θρηνεῖς ἀεὶ
τὴν σὴν ὅμαιμον μοῦνος Ἑλλήνων ἔτλη
θῦσαι θεοῖσιν, οὐκ ἴσον καμὼν ἐμοὶ
λύπης, ὅτ’ ἔσπειρ’, ὥσπερ ἡ τίκτουσ’ ἐγώ.
Εἶεν, δίδαξον δή με τοῦ χάριν τίνων
535 ἔθυσεν αὐτήν. Πότερον Ἀργείων ἐρεῖς;
ἀλλ’ οὐ μετῆν αὐτοῖσι τήν γ’ ἐμὴν κτανεῖν,
ἀλλ’ ἀντ’ ἀδελφοῦ δῆτα Μενέλεω κτανὼν
τἄμ’ οὐκ ἔμελλεν τῶνδέ μοι δώσειν δίκην;
Πότερον ἐκείνῳ παῖδες οὐκ ἦσαν διπλοῖ,
540 οὓς τῆσδε μᾶλλον εἰκὸς ἦν θνῄσκειν, πατρὸς
καὶ μητρὸς ὄντας ἧς ὁ πλοῦς ὅδ’ ἦν χάριν;
Ἢ τῶν ἐμῶν Ἅιδης τιν’ ἵμερον τέκνων

ἢ τῶν ἐκείνης ἔσχε δαίσασθαι πλέον;
Ἦ τῷ πανώλει πατρὶ τῶν μὲν ἐξ ἐμοῦ
παίδων πόθος παρεῖτο, Μενέλεω δ’ ἐνῆν;
Οὐ ταῦτ’ ἀβούλου καὶ κακοῦ γνώμην πατρός;
δοκῶ μέν, εἰ καὶ σῆς δίχα γνώμης λέγω·
φαίη δ’ ἂν ἡ θανοῦσά γ’, εἰ φωνὴν λάβοι.
Ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν οὐκ εἰμὶ τοῖς πεπραγμένοις
δύσθυμος· εἰ δὲ σοὶ δοκῶ φρονεῖν κακῶς,
γνώμην δικαίαν σχοῦσα τοὺς πέλας ψέγε.

ΗΛ. Ἐρεῖς μὲν οὐχὶ νῦν γέ μ’ ὡς ἄρξασά τι
λυπηρὸν εἶτα σοῦ τάδ’ ἐξήκουσ’ ὕπο·
ἀλλ’ ἢν ἐφῇς μοι, τοῦ τεθνηκότος θ’ ὕπερ
λέξαιμ’ ἂν ὀρθῶς τῆς κασιγνήτης θ’ ὁμοῦ.

ΚΛ. Καὶ μὴν ἐφίημ’· εἰ δέ μ’ ὦδ’ ἀεὶ λόγους
ἐξῆρχες, οὐκ ἂν ἦσθα λυπηρὰ κλύειν.

ΗΛ. Καὶ δὴ λέγω σοι. Πατέρα φῂς κτεῖναι· τίς ἂν
τούτου λόγος γένοιτ’ ἂν αἰσχίων ἔτι,
εἶτ’ οὖν δικαίως εἴτε μή; λέξω δέ σοι

ὡς οὐ δίκῃ γ’ ἔκτεινας, ἀλλά σ’ ἔσπασεν
πειθὼ κακοῦ πρὸς ἀνδρὸς ᾧ τανῦν ξύνει.
Ἑροῦ δὲ τὴν κυναγὸν Ἄρτεμιν τίνος
ποινὰς τὰ πολλὰ πνεύματ’ ἔσχ’ ἐν Αὐλίδι·
ἢ ‘γὼ φράσω; κείνης γὰρ οὐ θέμις μαθεῖν.
Πατήρ ποθ’ οὑμός, ὡς ἐγὼ κλύω, θεᾶς
παίζων κατ’ ἄλσος ἐξεκίνησεν ποδοῖν
στικτὸν κεράστην ἔλαφον, οὗ κατὰ σφαγὰς
ἐκκομπάσας ἔπος τι τυγχάνει βαλών.
Κἀκ τοῦδε μηνίσασα Λητῴα κόρη
κατεῖχ’ Ἀχαιούς, ὡς πατὴρ ἀντίσταθμον
τοῦ θηρὸς ἐκθύσειε τὴν αὐτοῦ κόρην.
Ὧδ’ ἦν τὰ κείνης θύματ’· οὐ γὰρ ἦν λύσις
ἄλλη στρατῷ πρὸς οἶκον οὐδ’ ἐς Ἴλιον.
Ἀνθ’ ὧν, βιασθεὶς πολλὰ κἀντιβάς, μόλις
ἔθυσεν αὐτήν, οὐχὶ Μενέλεω χάριν.
Εἰ δ’ οὖν, ἐρῶ γὰρ καὶ τὸ σόν, κεῖνον θέλων
ἐπωφελῆσαι ταῦτ’ ἔδρα, τούτου θανεῖν
χρῆν αὐτὸν οὕνεκ’ ἐκ σέθεν; ποίῳ νόμῳ;
Ὅρα, τιθεῖσα τόνδε τὸν νόμον βροτοῖς
μὴ πῆμα σαυτῇ καὶ μετάγνοιαν τιθῇς·
εἰ γὰρ κτενοῦμεν ἄλλον ἀντ’ ἄλλου, σύ τοι
πρώτη θάνοις ἄν, εἰ δίκης γε τυγχάνοις.
Ἀλλ’ εἰσόρα μὴ σκῆψιν οὐκ οὖσαν τίθης·
εἰ γὰρ θέλεις, δίδαξον ἀνθ’ ὅτου τανῦν
αἴσχιστα πάντων ἔργα δρῶσα τυγχάνεις,
ἥτις ξυνεύδεις τῷ παλαμναίῳ μεθ’ οὗ
πατέρα τὸν ἀμὸν πρόσθεν ἐξαπώλεσας,
καὶ παιδοποιεῖς, τοὺς δὲ πρόσθεν εὐσεβεῖς
κἀξ εὐσεβῶν βλαστόντας ἐκβαλοῦσ’ ἔχεις.
Πῶς ταῦτ’ ἐπαινέσαιμ’ ἄν; ἢ καὶ τοῦτ’ ἐρεῖς,
ὡς τῆς θυγατρὸς ἀντίποινα λαμβάνεις;
Αἰσχρῶς δ’, ἐάν περ καὶ λέγῃς· οὐ γὰρ καλὸν
ἐχθροῖς γαμεῖσθαι τῆς θυγατρὸς οὕνεκα.
Ἀλλ’ οὐ γὰρ οὐδὲ νουθετεῖν ἔξεστί σε,
ἢ πᾶσαν ἵης γλῶσσαν ὡς τὴν μητέρα
κακοστομοῦμεν. Καί σ’ ἔγωγε δεσπότιν
ἢ μητέρ’ οὐκ ἔλασσον εἰς ἡμᾶς νέμω,
ἢ ζῶ βίον μοχθηρόν, ἔκ τε σοῦ κακοῖς

πολλοῖς ἀεὶ ξυνοῦσα τοῦ τε συννόμου.
Ὁ δ’ ἄλλος ἔξω, χεῖρα σὴν μόλις φυγών,
τλήμων Ὀρέστης, δυστυχῆ τρίβει βίον·
ὃν πολλὰ δή με σοὶ τρέφειν μιάστορα
ἐπῃτιάσω· καὶ τόδ’, εἴπερ ἔσθενον,
ἔδρων ἄν, εὖ τοῦτ’ ἴσθι. Τοῦδέ γ’ οὕνεκα
κήρυσσέ μ’ εἰς ἅπαντας, εἴτε χρὴ κακήν,
εἴτε στόμαργον, εἴτ’ ἀναιδείας πλέαν·
εἰ γὰρ πέφυκα τῶνδε τῶν ἔργων ἴδρις,
σχεδόν τι τὴν σὴν οὐ καταισχύνω φύσιν.
ΧΟ. Ὁρῶ μένος πνέουσαν· εἰ δὲ σὺν δίκῃ
ξύνεστι, τοῦδε φροντίδ’ οὐκέτ’ εἰσορῶ.

ΚΛ. Ποίας δ’ ἐμοὶ δεῖ πρός γε τήνδε φροντίδος,
ἥτις τοιαῦτα τὴν τεκοῦσαν ὕβρισεν,
καὶ ταῦτα τηλικοῦτος; ἆρά σοι δοκεῖ
χωρεῖν ἂν εἰς πᾶν ἔργον αἰσχύνης ἄτερ;

ΗΛ. Εὖ νῦν ἐπίστω τῶνδέ μ’ αἰσχύνην ἔχειν,
κεἰ μὴ δοκῶ σοι· μανθάνω δ’ ὀθούνεκα
ἔξωρα πράσσω κοὐκ ἐμοὶ προσεικότα.
Ἀλλ’ ἡ γὰρ ἐκ σοῦ δυσμένεια καὶ τὰ σὰ
ἔργ’ ἐξαναγκάζει με ταῦτα δρᾶν βίᾳ·
αἰσχροῖς γὰρ αἰσχρὰ πράγματ’ ἐκδιδάσκεται.

ΚΛ. Ὦ θρέμμ’ ἀναιδές, ἦ σ’ ἐγὼ καὶ τἄμ’ ἔπη
καὶ τἄργα τἀμὰ πόλλ’ ἄγαν λέγειν ποεῖ.

ΗΛ. Σύ τοι λέγεις νιν, οὐκ ἐγώ· σὺ γὰρ ποεῖς

τοὔργον, τὰ δ’ ἔργα τοὺς λόγους εὑρίσκεται.

ΚΛ. Ἀλλ’ οὐ μὰ τὴν δέσποιναν Ἄρτεμιν θράσους
τοῦδ’ οὐκ ἀλύξεις, εὖτ’ ἂν Αἴγισθος μόλῃ.

ΗΛ. Ὁρᾷς; πρὸς ὀργὴν ἐκφέρῃ, μεθεῖσά μοι
λέγειν ἃ χρῄζοιμ’, οὐδ’ ἐπίστασαι κλύειν.
ΚΛ. Οὔκουν ἐάσεις οὐδ’ ὑπ’ εὐφήμου βοῆς
θῦσαί μ’, ἐπειδὴ σοί γ’ ἐφῆκα πᾶν λέγειν;

ΗΛ. Ἐῶ, κελεύω, θῦε· μηδ’ ἐπαιτιῶ
τοὐμὸν στόμ’, ὡς οὐκ ἂν πέρα λέξαιμ’ ἔτι.

ΚΛ. Ἔπαιρε δὴ σὺ θύμαθ’ ἡ παροῦσά μοι
πάγκαρπ’, ἄνακτι τῷδ’ ὅπως λυτηρίους
εὐχὰς ἀνάσχω δειμάτων ἃ νῦν ἔχω.
Κλύοις ἂν ἤδη Φοῖβε προστατήριε,
κεκρυμμένην μου βάξιν· οὐ γὰρ ἐν φίλοις
ὁ μῦθος, οὐδὲ πᾶν ἀναπτύξαι πρέπει
πρὸς φῶς, παρούσης τῆσδε πλησίας ἐμοί,
μὴ σὺν φθόνῳ τε καὶ πολυγλώσσῳ βοῇ
σπείρῃ ματαίαν βάξιν εἰς πᾶσαν πόλιν·
ἀλλ’ ὦδ’ ἄκουε· τῇδε γὰρ κἀγὼ φράσω.
Ἃ γὰρ προσεῖδον νυκτὶ τῇδε φάσματα
δισσῶν ὀνείρων, ταῦτά μοι, Λύκει’ ἄναξ,
εἰ μὲν πέφηνεν ἐσθλά, δὸς τελεσφόρα,
εἰ δ’ ἐχθρά, τοῖς ἐχθροῖσιν ἔμπαλιν μέθες.
Καὶ μή με πλούτου τοῦ παρόντος εἴ τινες
δόλοισι βουλεύουσιν ἐκβαλεῖν, ἐφῇς,

ἀλλ’ ὦδέ μ’ αἰεὶ ζῶσαν ἀβλαβεῖ βίῳ
δόμους Ἀτρειδῶν σκῆπτρά τ’ ἀμφέπειν τάδε,
φίλοισί τε ξυνοῦσαν οἷς ξύνειμι νῦν
εὐημεροῦσαν καὶ τέκνων ὅσων ἐμοὶ
δύσνοια μὴ πρόσεστιν ἢ λύπη πικρά.
Ταῦτ’, ὦ Λύκει’ Ἄπολλον, ἵλεως κλύων
δὸς πᾶσιν ἡμῖν ὥσπερ ἐξαιτούμεθα·
τὰ δ’ ἄλλα πάντα καὶ σιωπώσης ἐμοῦ
ἐπαξιῶ σε δαίμον’ ὄντ’ ἐξειδέναι·
τοὺς ἐκ Διὸς γὰρ εἰκός ἐστι πάνθ’ ὁρᾶν.
ΠΑ. Ξέναι γυναῖκες, πῶς ἂν εἰδείην σαφῶς
εἰ τοῦ τυράννου δώματ’ Αἰγίσθου τάδε;

ΧΟ. Τάδ’ ἐστίν, ὦ ξέν’· αὐτὸς εἴκασας καλῶς.

ΠΑ. Ἦ καὶ δάμαρτα τήνδ’ ἐπεικάζων κυρῶ
κείνου; πρέπει γὰρ ὡς τύραννος εἰσορᾶν.
ΧΟ. Μάλιστα πάντων· ἥδε σοι κείνη πάρα.

ΠΑ. Ὦ χαῖρ’, ἄνασσα· σοὶ φέρων ἥκω λόγους
ἡδεῖς φίλου παρ’ ἀνδρὸς Αἰγίσθῳ θ’ ὁμοῦ.

ΚΛ. Ἐδεξάμην τὸ ῥηθέν· εἰδέναι δέ σου
πρώτιστα χρῄζω τίς σ’ ἀπέστειλεν βροτῶν.
ΠΑ. Φανοτεὺς ὁ Φωκεύς, πρᾶγμα πορσύνων μέγα.

ΚΛ. Τὸ ποῖον, ὦ ξέν’; εἰπέ· παρὰ φίλου γὰρ ὢν

ἀνδρὸς, σάφ’ οἶδα, προσφιλεῖς λέξεις λόγους.

ΠΑ. Τέθνηκ’ Ὀρέστης· ἐν βραχεῖ ξυνθεὶς λέγω.

ΗΛ. Οἰ ‘γὼ τάλαιν’, ὄλωλα τῇδ’ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ.
675 ΚΛ. Τί φῄς, τί φῄς, ὦ ξεῖνε; μὴ ταύτης κλύε.

ΠΑ. Θανόντ’ Ὀρέστην νῦν τε καὶ πάλαι λέγω.

ΗΛ. Ἀπωλόμην δύστηνος, οὐδέν εἰμ’ ἔτι.

ΚΛ. Σὺ μὲν τὰ σαυτῆς πρᾶσσ’· ἐμοὶ δὲ σύ, ξένε,
τἀληθὲς εἰπέ· τῷ τρόπῳ διόλλυται;
680 ΠΑ. Κἀπεμπόμην πρὸς ταῦτα καὶ τὸ πᾶν φράσω.
Κεῖνος γὰρ ἐλθὼν εἰς τὸ κλεινὸν Ἑλλάδος
πρόσχημ’ ἀγῶνος, Δελφικῶν ἄθλων χάριν,
ὅτ’ ᾔσθετ’ ἀνδρὸς ὀρθίων κηρυγμάτων
δρόμον προκηρύξαντος, οὗ πρώτη κρίσις,
685 εἰσῆλθε λαμπρός, πᾶσι τοῖς ἐκεῖ σέβας·
δρόμου δ’ ἰσώσας τῇ φύσει τὰ τέρματα,
νίκης ἔχων ἐξῆλθε πάντιμον γέρας.
Χὤπως μὲν ἐν πολλοῖσι παῦρά σοι λέγω
οὐκ οἶδα τοιοῦδ’ ἀνδρὸς ἔργα καὶ κράτη·
690 ἓν δ’ ἴσθ’ ὅσων γὰρ εἰσεκήρυξαν βραβῆς
†δρόμων, διαύλων, πένταθλ’ ἃ νομίζεται ,
τούτων ἐνεγκὼν πάντα τἀπινίκια,
ὠλβίζετ’, Ἀργεῖος μὲν ἀνακαλούμενος,

ὄνομα δ’ Ὀρέστης, τοῦ τὸ κλεινὸν Ἑλλάδος
Ἀγαμέμνονος στράτευμ’ ἀγείραντός ποτε.
Καὶ ταῦτα μὲν τοιαῦθ’· ὅταν δέ τις θεῶν
βλάπτῃ, δύναιτ’ ἂν οὐδ’ ἂν ἰσχύων φυγεῖν.
Κεῖνος γὰρ ἄλλης ἡμέρας, ὅθ’ ἱππικῶν
ἦν ἡλίου τέλλοντος ὠκύπους ἀγών,
εἰσῆλθε πολλῶν ἁρματηλατῶν μέτα.
Εἷς ἦν Ἀχαιός, εἷς ἀπὸ Σπάρτης, δύο
Λίβυες, ζυγωτῶν ἁρμάτων ἐπιστάται·
κἀκεῖνος ἐν τούτοισι θεσσαλὰς ἔχων
ἵππους, ὁ πέμπτος· ἕκτος ἐξ Αἰτωλίας
ξανθαῖσι πώλοις· ἕβδομος Μάγνης ἀνήρ·
ὁ δ’ ὄγδοος λεύκιππος, Αἰνιὰν γένος·
ἔνατος Ἀθηνῶν τῶν θεοδμήτων ἄπο·
Βοιωτὸς ἄλλος, δέκατον ἐκπληρῶν ὄχον.
Στάντες δ’ ὅθ’ αὐτοὺς οἱ τεταγμένοι βραβῆς
κλήροις ἔπηλαν καὶ κατέστησαν δίφρους,
χαλκῆς ὑπαὶ σάλπιγγος ᾗξαν· οἱ δ’ ἅμα
ἵπποις ὁμοκλήσαντες ἡνίας χεροῖν
ἔσεισαν· ἐν δὲ πᾶς ἐμεστώθη δρόμος
κτύπου κροτητῶν ἁρμάτων· κόνις δ’ ἄνω
φορεῖθ’· ὁμοῦ δὲ πάντες ἀναμεμιγμένοι
φείδοντο κέντρων οὐδέν, ὡς ὑπερβάλοι
χνόας τις αὐτῶν καὶ φρυάγμαθ’ ἱππικά.
Ὁμοῦ γὰρ ἀμφὶ νῶτα καὶ τροχῶν βάσεις
ἤφριζον, εἰσέβαλλον ἱππικαὶ πνοαί.
Κεῖνος δ’ ὑπ’ αὐτὴν ἐσχάτην στήλην ἔχων
ἔχριμπτ’ ἀεὶ σύριγγα, δεξιὸν δ’ ἀνεὶς
σειραῖον ἵππον, εἶργε τὸν προσκείμενον.
Καὶ πρὶν μὲν ὀρθοὶ πάντες ἕστασαν δίφροι·
ἔπειτα δ’ Αἰνιᾶνος ἀνδρὸς ἄστομοι
πῶλοι βίᾳ φέρουσιν, ἐκ δ’ ὑποστροφῆς,
τελοῦντες ἕκτον ἕβδομόν τ’ ἤδη δρόμον,
μέτωπα συμπαίουσι βαρκαίοις ὄχοις·
κἀντεῦθεν ἄλλος ἄλλον ἐξ ἑνὸς κακοῦ
ἔθραυε κἀνέπιπτε, πᾶν δ’ ἐπίμπλατο
ναυαγίων Κρισαῖον ἱππικῶν πέδον.
Γνοὺς δ’ οὐξ Ἀθηνῶν δεινὸς ἡνιοστρόφος
ἔξω παρασπᾷ κἀνοκωχεύει παρεὶς

κλύδων’ ἔφιππον ἐν μέσῳ κυκώμενον.
Ἤλαυνε δ’ ἔσχατος μέν, ὑστέρας ἔχων
πώλους Ὀρέστης, τῷ τέλει πίστιν φέρων·
ὅπως δ’ ὁρᾷ μόνον νιν ἐλλελειμμένον,
ὀξὺν δι’ ὤτων κέλαδον ἐνσείσας θοαῖς
πώλοις διώκει, κἀξισώσαντε ζυγὰ
ἠλαυνέτην, τότ’ ἄλλος, ἄλλοθ’ ἄτερος
κάρα προβάλλων ἱππικῶν ὀχημάτων.
Καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἄλλους πάντας ἀσφαλεῖς δρόμους
ὠρθοῦθ’ ὁ τλήμων ὀρθὸς ἐξ ὀρθῶν δίφρων·
ἔπειτα, λύων ἡνίαν ἀριστερὰν
κάμπτοντος ἵππου, λανθάνει στήλην ἄκραν
παίσας· ἔθραυσε δ’ ἄξονος μέσας χνόας,
κἀξ ἀντύγων ὤλισθε· σὺν δ’ ἐλίσσεται
τμητοῖς ἱμᾶσι· τοῦ δὲ πίπτοντος πέδῳ
πῶλοι διεσπάρησαν ἐς μέσον δρόμον.
Στρατὸς δ’ ὅπως ὁρᾷ νιν ἐκπεπτωκότα
δίφρων, ἀνωλόλυξε τὸν νεανίαν,
οἵ’ ἔργα δράσας οἷα λαγχάνει κακά,
φορούμενος πρὸς οὖδας, ἄλλοτ’ οὐρανῷ
σκέλη προφαίνων, ἔστε νιν διφρηλάται,
μόλις κατασχεθόντες ἱππικὸν δρόμον,
ἔλυσαν αἱματηρόν, ὥστε μηδένα
γνῶναι φίλων ἰδόντ’ ἂν ἄθλιον δέμας.
Καί νιν πυρᾷ κέαντες εὐθὺς ἐν βραχεῖ
χαλκῷ μέγιστον σῶμα δειλαίας σποδοῦ
φέρουσιν ἄνδρες Φωκέων τεταγμένοι,
ὅπως πατρῴας τύμβον ἐκλάχοι χθονός.
Τοιαῦτά σοι ταῦτ’ ἐστίν, ὡς μὲν ἐν λόγοις
ἀλγεινά, τοῖς δ’ ἰδοῦσιν, οἵπερ εἴδομεν,
μέγιστα πάντων ὧν ὅπωπ’ ἐγὼ κακῶν.

ΧΟ. Φεῦ φεῦ· τὸ πᾶν δὴ δεσπόταισι τοῖς πάλαι
πρόρριζον, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἔφθαρται γένος.

ΚΛ. Ὦ Ζεῦ, τί ταῦτα; πότερον εὐτυχῆ λέγω
ἢ δεινὰ μέν, κέρδη δέ; λυπηρῶς δ’ ἔχει,
εἰ τοῖς ἐμαυτῆς τὸν βίον σῴζω κακοῖς.

ΠΑ. Τί δ’ ὧδ’ ἀθυμεῖς, ὦ γύναι, τῷ νῦν λόγῳ;
770 ΚΛ. Δεινὸν τὸ τίκτειν ἐστίν· οὐδὲ γὰρ κακῶς
πάσχοντι μῖσος ὧν τέκῃ προσγίγνεται.

ΠΑ. Μάτην ἄρ’ ἡμεῖς, ὡς ἔοικεν, ἥκομεν.

ΚΛ. Οὔτοι μάτην γε· πῶς γὰρ ἂν μάτην λέγοις;
εἴ μοι θανόντος πίστ’ ἔχων τεκμήρια
775 προσῆλθες, ὅστις τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς γεγώς,
μαστῶν ἀποστὰς καὶ τροφῆς ἐμῆς, φυγὰς
ἀπεξενοῦτο· καί μ’, ἐπεὶ τῆσδε χθονὸς
ἐξῆλθεν, οὐκέτ’ εἶδεν· ἐγκαλῶν δέ μοι
φόνους πατρῴους δείν’ ἐπηπείλει τελεῖν·
780 ὥστ’ οὔτε νυκτὸς ὕπνον οὔτ’ ἐξ ἡμέρας
ἐμὲ στεγάζειν ἡδύν, ἀλλ’ ὁ προστατῶν
χρόνος διῆγέ μ’ αἰὲν ὡς θανουμένην.
Νῦν δ’ - ἡμέρᾳ γὰρ τῇδ’ ἀπήλλαγμαι φόβου
πρὸς τῆσδ’ ἐκείνου θ’· ἥδε γὰρ μείζων βλάβη
785 ξύνοικος ἦν μοι, τοὐμὸν ἐκπίνουσ’ ἀεὶ
ψυχῆς ἄκρατον αἷμα - νῦν δ’ ἔκηλά που
τῶν τῆσδ’ ἀπειλῶν οὕνεχ’ ἡμερεύσομεν.

ΗΛ. Οἴμοι τάλαινα· νῦν γὰρ οἰμῶξαι πάρα,
Ὀρέστα, τὴν σὴν ξυμφοράν, ὅθ’ ὧδ’ ἔχων

πρὸς τῆσδ’ ὑβρίζῃ μητρός· ἦρ’ ἔχει καλῶς;

ΚΛ. Οὗτοι σύ· κεῖνος δ’, ὡς ἔχει, καλῶς ἔχει.

ΗΛ. Ἄκουε, Νέμεσι τοῦ θανόντος ἀρτίως.

ΚΛ. Ἤκουσεν ὧν δεῖ κἀπεκύρωσεν καλῶς.

ΗΛ. Ὕβριζε· νῦν γὰρ εὐτυχοῦσα τυγχάνεις.
ΚΛ. Οὔκουν Ὀρέστης καὶ σὺ παύσετον τάδε.

ΗΛ. Πεπαύμεθ’ ἡμεῖς, οὐχ ὅπως σὲ παύσομεν.

ΚΛ. Πολλῶν ἂν ἥκοις, ὦ ξέν’, ἄξιος τυχεῖν,
εἰ τήνδ’ ἔπαυσας τῆς πολυγλώσσου βοῆς.

ΠΑ. Οὐκοῦν ἀποστείχοιμ’ ἄν, εἰ τάδ’ εὖ κυρεῖ.
ΚΛ. Ἥκιστ’· ἐπείπερ οὔτ’ ἐμοῦ καταξίως
πράξειας οὔτε τοῦ πορεύσαντος ξένου.
Ἀλλ’ εἴσιθ’ εἴσω· τήνδε δ’ ἔκτοθεν βοᾶν
ἔα τά θ’ αὐτῆς καὶ τὰ τῶν φίλων κακά.

ΗΛ. Ἆρ’ ὑμίν, ὡς ἀλγοῦσα κὠδυνωμένη,
δεινῶς δακρῦσαι κἀπικωκῦσαι δοκεῖ
τὸν υἱὸν ἡ δύστηνος ὧδ’ ὀλωλότα,
ἀλλ’ ἐγγελῶσα φροῦδος; Ὦ τάλαιν’ ἐγώ·
Ὀρέστα φίλταθ’, ὥς μ’ ἀπώλεσας θανών.
Ἀποσπάσας γὰρ τῆς ἐμῆς οἴχῃ φρενὸς
αἵ μοι μόναι παρῆσαν ἐλπίδων ἔτι,
σὲ πατρὸς ἥξειν ζῶντα τιμωρόν ποτε
κἀμοῦ ταλαίνης. Νῦν δὲ ποῖ με χρὴ μολεῖν;
μόνη γάρ εἰμι, σοῦ τ’ ἀπεστερημένη
καὶ πατρός· ἤδη δεῖ με δουλεύειν πάλιν
ἐν τοῖσιν ἐχθίστοισιν ἀνθρώπων ἐμοί,
φονεῦσι πατρός· ἆρά μοι καλῶς ἔχει;
Ἀλλ’ οὔ τι μὴν ἔγωγε τοῦ λοιποῦ χρόνου
ξύνοικος εἴσειμ’, ἀλλὰ τῇδε πρὸς πύλῃ
παρεῖσ’ ἐμαυτὴν ἄφιλος αὐανῶ βίον.
Πρὸς ταῦτα καινέτω τις, εἰ βαρύνεται,
τῶν ἔνδον ὄντων· ὡς χάρις μέν, ἢν κτάνῃ,
λύπη δ’, ἐὰν ζῶ· τοῦ βίου δ’ οὐδεὶς πόθος.

ΧΟ. Ποῦ ποτε κεραυνοὶ Διός, ἢ ποῦ φαέθων Ἅ-Str. 1 .
λιος, εἰ ταῦτ’ ἐφορῶν-
τες κρύπτουσιν ἔκηλοι;

ΗΛ. Ἔ ἔ, αἰαῖ. ΧΟ. Ἰὼ παῖ, τί δακρύεις;
ΗΛ. Φεῦ. ΧΟ. Μηδὲν μέγ’ ἀΰσῃς.

ΗΛ. Ἀπολεῖς. ΧΟ. Πῶς;

ΗΛ. Εἰ τῶν φανερῶς οἰχομέ-
νων εἰς Ἅΐδαν ἐλπίδ’ ὑπ-
835 οίσεις, κατ’ ἐμοῦ τακομέ-
νας μᾶλλον ἐπεμβάσῃ.

ΧΟ. Οἶδα γὰρ ἄνακτ’ Ἀμφιάρεων χρυσοδέτοις ἔρ-Ant. 1 .
κεσι κρυφθέντα γυναι-
840 κῶν· καὶ νῦν ὑπὸ γαίας -

ΗΛ. Ἒ ἔ, ἰώ. ΧΟ. πάμψυχος ἀνάσσει.

ΗΛ. Φεῦ. ΧΟ. Φεῦ δῆτ’· ὀλοὰ γὰρ -
845 ΗΛ. ἐδάμη. ΧΟ. Ναί.

ΗΛ. Οἶδ’ οἶδ’· ἐφάνη γὰρ μελέ-
τωρ ἀμφὶ τὸν ἐν πένθει· ἐ-
μοὶ δ’ οὔτις ἔτ’ ἔσθ’· ὃς γὰρ ἔτ’
ἦν, φροῦδος ἀναρπασθείς.

ΧΟ. Δειλαία δειλαίων κυρεῖς. Str. 2 .
850 ΗΛ. Κἀγὼ τοῦδ’ ἴστωρ, ὑπερίστωρ,
πανσύρτῳ παμμήνῳ πολλῶν
δεινῶν ‹τε› στυγνῶν τ’ ἀχθῶν.

ΧΟ. Εἴδομεν ἃ θροεῖς.

ΗΛ. Μή μέ νυν μηκέτι
παραγάγῃς, ἵν’ οὐ - ΧΟ. Τί φῄς;

ΗΛ. πάρεισιν ἐλπίδων ἔτι κοινοτόκων
εὐπατριδᾶν τ’ ἀρωγαί.
ΧΟ. Πᾶσι θνατοῖς ἔφυ μόρος. Ant. 2 .

ΗΛ. Ἦ καὶ χαλάργοις ἐν ἀμίλλαις
οὕτως, ὡς κείνῳ δυστάνῳ,
τμητοῖς ὁλκοῖς ἐγκῦρσαι;

ΧΟ. Ἄσκοπος ἁ λώβα.
ΗΛ. Πῶς γὰρ οὔκ; εἰ ξένος
ἄτερ ἐμᾶν χερῶν - ΧΟ. Παπαῖ.

ΗΛ. κέκευθεν, οὔτε του τάφου ἀντιάσας
οὔτε γόων παρ’ ἡμῶν.

ΧΡ. Ὑφ’ ἡδονῆς τοι, φιλτάτη, διώκομαι
τὸ κόσμιον μεθεῖσα σὺν τάχει μολεῖν·
φέρω γὰρ ἡδονάς τε κἀνάπαυλαν ὧν
πάροιθεν εἶχες καὶ κατέστενες κακῶν.
ΗΛ. Πόθεν δ’ ἂν εὕροις τῶν ἐμῶν σὺ πημάτων

ἄρηξιν, οἷς ἵασιν οὐκ ἔνεστ᾽ ἰδεῖν;

ΧΡ. Πάρεστ᾽ Ὀρέστης ἡμίν, ἴσθι τοῦτ᾽ ἐμοῦ
κλύουσ᾽, ἐναργῶς, ὥσπερ εἰσορᾷς ἐμέ.

ΗΛ. Ἀλλ᾽ ἦ μέμηνας, ὦ τάλαινα, κἀπὶ τοῖς
880 σαυτῆς κακοῖσι κἀπὶ τοῖς ἐμοῖς γελᾷς;

ΧΡ. Μὰ τὴν πατρῴαν ἑστίαν, ἀλλ᾽ οὐχ ὕβριν
λέγω τάδ᾽, ἀλλ᾽ ἐκεῖνον ὡς παρόντα νῷν.

ΗΛ. Οἴμοι τάλαινα· καὶ τίνος βροτῶν λόγον
τόνδ᾽ εἰσακούσασ᾽ ὧδε πιστεύεις ἄγαν;
885 ΧΡ. Ἐγὼ μὲν ἐξ ἐμοῦ τε κοὐκ ἄλλης, σαφῆ
σημεῖ᾽ ἰδοῦσα, τῷδε πιστεύω λόγῳ.

ΗΛ. Τίν᾽, ὦ τάλαιν᾽, ἰδοῦσα πίστιν; ἐς τί μοι
βλέψασα θάλπῃ τῷδ᾽ ἀνηκέστῳ πυρί;

ΧΡ. Πρός νυν θεῶν ἄκουσον, ὡς μαθοῦσά μου
890 τὸ λοιπὸν ἢ φρονοῦσαν ἢ μώραν λέγῃς.

ΗΛ. Σὺ δ’ οὖν λέγ’, εἴ σοι τῷ λόγῳ τις ἡδονή.

ΧΡ. Καὶ δὴ λέγω σοι πᾶν ὅσον κατειδόμην.
Ἐπεὶ γὰρ ἦλθον πατρὸς ἀρχαῖον τάφον,
ὁρῶ κολώνης ἐξ ἄκρας νεορρύτους
πηγὰς γάλακτος, καὶ περιστεφῆ κύκλῳ
πάντων ὅσ’ ἔστιν ἀνθέων θήκην πατρός·
ἰδοῦσα δ’ ἔσχον θαῦμα, καὶ περισκοπῶ
μή πού τις ἡμῖν ἐγγὺς ἐγχρίμπτῃ βροτῶν.
Ὡς δ’ ἐν γαλήνῃ πάντ’ ἐδερκόμην τόπον,
τύμβου προσεῖρπον ἄσσον· ἐσχάτης δ’ ὁρῶ
πυρᾶς νεώρη βόστρυχον τετμημένον·
κεὐθὺς τάλαιν’ ὡς εἶδον, ἐμπαίει τί μοι
ψυχῇ σύνηθες ὄμμα, φιλτάτου βροτῶν
πάντων Ὀρέστου τοῦθ’ ὁρᾶν τεκμήριον·
καὶ χερσὶ βαστάσασα δυσφημῶ μὲν οὔ,
χαρᾷ δὲ πίμπλημ’ εὐθὺς ὄμμα δακρύων.
Καὶ νῦν θ’ ὁμοίως καὶ τότ’ ἐξεπίσταμαι
μή του τόδ’ ἀγλάϊσμα πλὴν κείνου μολεῖν·
τῷ γὰρ προσήκει πλήν γ’ ἐμοῦ καὶ σοῦ τόδε;
Κἀγὼ μὲν οὐκ ἔδρασα, τοῦτ’ ἐπίσταμαι,
οὐδ’ αὖ σύ· πῶς γάρ; ἦ γε μηδὲ πρὸς θεοὺς
ἔξεστ’ ἀκλαύτῳ τῆσδ’ ἀποστῆναι στέγης·
ἄλλ’ οὐδὲ μὲν δὴ μητρὸς οὔθ’ ὁ νοῦς φιλεῖ
τοιαῦτα πράσσειν οὔτε δρῶσ’ ἐλάνθανεν·
ἀλλ’ ἔστ’ Ὀρέστου ταῦτα τἀπιτίμια.
Ἀλλ’, ὦ φίλη, θάρσυνε· τοῖς αὐτοῖσί τοι
οὐχ αὐτὸς αἰεὶ δαιμόνων παραστατεῖ·
νῷν ἦν τὰ πρόσθε στυγνός; ἡ δὲ νῦν ἴσως
πολλῶν ὑπάρξει κῦρος ἡμέρα καλῶν.
ΗΛ. Φεῦ τῆς ἀνοίας, ὥς σ’ ἐποικτίρω πάλαι.

ΧΡ. Τί δ’ ἔστιν; οὐ πρὸς ἡδονὴν λέγω τάδε;

ΗΛ. Οὐκ οἶσθ’ ὅποι γῆς οὐδ’ ὅποι γνώμης φέρῃ.

ΧΡ. Πῶς δ’ οὐκ ἐγὼ κάτοιδ’ ἃ γ’ εἶδον ἐμφανῶς;

ΗΛ. Τέθνηκεν, ὦ τάλαινα· τἀκείνου δέ σοι
925 σωτήρι’ ἔρρει· μηδὲν ἐς κεῖνόν γ’ ὅρα.

ΧΡ. Οἴμοι τάλαινα· τοῦ τάδ’ ἤκουσας βροτῶν;

ΗΛ. Τοῦ πλησίον παρόντος ἠνίκ’ ὤλλυτο.

ΧΡ. Καὶ ποῦ ‘στιν οὗτος; θαῦμά τοί μ’ ὑπέρχεται.

ΗΛ. Κατ’ οἶκον, ἡδὺς οὐδὲ μητρὶ δυσχερής.
930 ΧΡ. Οἴμοι τάλαινα· τοῦ γὰρ ἀνθρώπων ποτ’ ἦν
τὰ πολλὰ πατρὸς πρὸς τάφον κτερίσματα;

ΗΛ. Οἶμαι μάλιστ’ ἔγωγε τοῦ τεθνηκότος
μνημεῖ’ Ὀρέστου ταῦτα προσθεῖναί τινα.

ΧΡ. Ὢ δυστυχής· ἐγὼ δὲ σὺν χαρᾷ λόγους
τοιούσδ’ ἔχουσ’ ἔσπευδον, οὐκ εἰδυῖ’ ἄρα
ἵν’ ἦμεν ἄτης· ἀλλὰ νῦν, ὅθ’ ἱκόμην,
τά τ’ ὄντα πρόσθεν ἄλλα θ’ εὑρίσκω κακά.

ΗΛ. Οὕτως ἔχει σοι ταῦτ’· ἐὰν δέ μοι πίθῃ,
τῆς νῦν παρούσης πημονῆς λύσεις βάρος.

940 ΧΡ. Ἦ τοὺς θανόντας ἐξαναστήσω ποτέ;

ΗΛ. Οὐκ ἔσθ’ ὅ γ’ εἶπον· οὐ γὰρ ὧδ’ ἄφρων ἔφυν.

ΧΡ. Τί γὰρ κελεύεις ὧν ἐγὼ φερέγγυος;

ΗΛ. Τλῆναί σε δρῶσαν ἂν ἐγὼ παραινέσω.

ΧΡ. Ἀλλ’ εἴ τις ὠφέλειά γ’, οὐκ ἀπώσομαι.

945 ΗΛ. Ὅρα, πόνου τοι χωρὶς οὐδὲν εὐτυχεῖ.

ΧΡ. Ὁρῶ· ξυνοίσω πᾶν ὅσονπερ ἂν σθένω.

ΗΛ. Ἄκουε δή νυν ᾗ βεβούλευμαι ποεῖν.
Παρουσίαν μὲν οἶσθα καὶ σύ που φίλων
ὡς οὔτις ἡμῖν ἐστιν, ἀλλ’ Ἅιδης λαβὼν
ἀπεστέρηκε καὶ μόνα λελείμμεθον·
ἐγὼ δ’, ἕως μὲν τὸν κασίγνητον βίῳ
θάλλοντ’ ἔτ’ εἰσήκουον, εἶχον ἐλπίδας
φόνου ποτ’ αὐτὸν πράκτορ’ ἵξεσθαι πατρός·
νῦν δ’, ἡνίκ’ οὐκέτ’ ἔστιν, εἰς σὲ δὴ βλέπω,
ὅπως τὸν αὐτόχειρα πατρῴου φόνου
ξὺν τῇδ’ ἀδελφῇ μὴ κατοκνήσεις κτανεῖν,
Αἴγισθον· οὐδὲν γάρ σε δεῖ κρύπτειν μ’ ἔτι.
Ποῖ γὰρ μενεῖς ῥᾴθυμος ἐς τίν’ ἐλπίδων
βλέψασ’ ἔτ’ ὀρθήν; ᾗ πάρεστι μὲν στένειν
πλούτου πατρῴου κτῆσιν ἐστερημένῃ,
πάρεστι δ’ ἀλγεῖν ἐς τοσόνδε τοῦ χρόνου
ἄλεκτρα γηράσκουσαν ἀνυμέναιά τε.
Καὶ τῶνδε μέντοι μηκέτ’ ἐλπίσῃς ὅπως
τεύξῃ ποτ’· οὐ γὰρ ὧδ’ ἄβουλός ἐστ’ ἀνὴρ
Αἴγισθος, ὥστε σόν ποτ’ ἢ κἀμὸν γένος
βλαστεῖν ἐᾶσαι, πημονὴν αὐτῷ σαφῆ.
Ἀλλ’ ἢν ἐπίσπῃ τοῖς ἐμοῖς βουλεύμασιν,
πρῶτον μὲν εὐσέβειαν ἐκ πατρὸς κάτω
θανόντος οἴσῃ τοῦ κασιγνήτου θ’ ἅμα·
ἔπειτα δ’, ὥσπερ ἐξέφυς, ἐλευθέρα
καλῇ τὸ λοιπὸν καὶ γάμων ἐπαξίων
τεύξῃ· φιλεῖ γὰρ πρὸς τὰ χρηστὰ πᾶς ὁρᾶν.
Λόγῳ γε μὴν εὔκλειαν οὐχ ὁρᾷς ὅσην
σαυτῇ τε κἀμοὶ προσβαλεῖς πεισθεῖσ’ ἐμοί;
Τίς γάρ ποτ’ ἀστῶν ἢ ξένων ἡμᾶς ἰδὼν
τοιοῖσδ’ ἐπαίνοις οὐχὶ δεξιώσεται;
“Ἴδεσθε τώδε τὼ κασιγνήτω, φίλοι,
ὦ τὸν πατρῷον οἶκον ἐξεσωσάτην,
ὦ τοῖσιν ἐχθροῖς εὖ βεβηκόσιν ποτέ,
ψυχῆς ἀφειδήσαντε, προὐστήτην φόνου·
τούτω φιλεῖν χρή, τώδε χρὴ πάντας σέβειν·
τώδ’ ἔν θ’ ἑορταῖς ἔν τε πανδήμῳ πόλει
τιμᾶν ἅπαντας οὕνεκ’ ἀνδρείας χρεών.”
Τοιαῦτά τοι νὼ πᾶς τις ἐξερεῖ βροτῶν,

ζώσαιν θανούσαιν θ’ ὥστε μὴ ‘κλιπεῖν κλέος.
Ἀλλ’, ὦ φίλη, πείσθητι, συμπόνει πατρί,
σύγκαμν’ ἀδελφῷ, παῦσον ἐκ κακῶν ἐμέ,
παῦσον δὲ σαυτήν, τοῦτο γιγνώσκουσ’ ὅτι
ζῆν αἰσχρὸν αἰσχρῶς τοῖς καλῶς πεφυκόσιν.
ΧΟ. Ἐν τοῖς τοιούτοις ἐστὶν ἡ προμηθία
καὶ τῷ λέγοντι καὶ κλύοντι σύμμαχος.

ΧΡ. Καὶ πρίν γε φωνεῖν, ὦ γυναῖκες, εἰ φρενῶν
ἐτύγχαν’ αὕτη μὴ κακῶν, ἐσῴζετ’ ἂν
τὴν εὐλάβειαν, ὥσπερ οὐχὶ σῴζεται.
Ποῖ γάρ ποτ’ ἐμβλέψασα τοιοῦτον θράσος
αὐτή θ’ ὁπλίζῃ κἄμ’ ὑπηρετεῖν καλεῖς;
Οὐκ εἰσορᾷς; γυνὴ μὲν οὐδ’ ἀνὴρ ἔφυς,
σθένεις δ’ ἔλασσον τῶν ἐναντίων χερί.
Δαίμων δὲ τοῖς μὲν εὐτυχὴς καθ’ ἡμέραν,
ἡμῖν δ’ ἀπορρεῖ κἀπὶ μηδὲν ἔρχεται.
Τίς οὖν τοιοῦτον ἄνδρα βουλεύων ἐλεῖν
ἄλυπος ἄτης ἐξαπαλλαχθήσεται;
Ὅρα κακῶς πράσσοντε μὴ μείζω κακὰ
κτησώμεθ’, εἴ τις τούσδ’ ἀκούσεται λόγους.
Λύει γὰρ ἡμᾶς οὐδὲν οὐδ’ ἐπωφελεῖ
βάξιν καλὴν λαβόντε δυσκλεῶς θανεῖν·
οὐ γὰρ θανεῖν ἔχθιστον, ἀλλ’ ὅταν θανεῖν
χρῄζων τις εἶτα μηδὲ τοῦτ’ ἔχῃ λαβεῖν.
Ἀλλ’ ἀντιάζω, πρὶν πανωλέθρους τὸ πᾶν
ἡμᾶς τ’ ὀλέσθαι κἀξερημῶσαι γένος,
κατάσχες ὀργήν. Καὶ τὰ μὲν λελεγμένα
ἄρρητ’ ἐγώ σοι κἀτελῆ φυλάξομαι,
αὐτὴ δὲ νοῦν σχὲς ἀλλὰ τῷ χρόνῳ ποτέ,
σθένουσα μηδὲν τοῖς κρατοῦσιν εἰκαθεῖν.
ΧΟ. Πείθου· προνοίας οὐδὲν ἀνθρώποις ἔφυ
κέρδος λαβεῖν ἄμεινον, οὐδὲ νοῦ σοφοῦ.

ΗΛ. Ἀπροσδόκητον οὐδὲν εἴρηκας· καλῶς δ’
ᾔδειν σ’ ἀπορρίψουσαν ἀπηγγελλόμην.
Ἀλλ’ αὐτόχειρί μοι μόνῃ τε δραστέον
1020 τοὔργον τόδ’· οὐ γὰρ δὴ κενόν γ’ ἀφήσομεν.

ΧΡ. Φεῦ·
εἴθ’ ὤφελες τοιάδε τὴν γνώμην πατρὸς
θνῄσκοντος εἶναι· πάντα γ’ ἂν κατειργάσω.

ΗΛ. Ἀλλ’ ἦ φύσιν γε, τὸν δὲ νοῦν ἥσσων τότε.

ΧΡ. Ἄσκει τοιαύτη νοῦν δι’ αἰῶνος μένειν.
1025 ΗΛ. Ὡς οὐχὶ συνδράσουσα νουθετεῖς τάδε.

ΧΡ. Εἰκὸς γὰρ ἐγχειροῦντα καὶ πράσσειν κακῶς.

ΗΛ. Ζηλῶ σε τοῦ νοῦ, τῆς δὲ δειλίας στυγῶ.

ΧΡ. Ἀνέξομαι κλύουσα χὤταν ‹μ’› εὖ λέγῃς.

ΗΛ. Ἀλλ’ οὔ ποτ’ ἐξ ἐμοῦ γε μὴ πάθῃς τόδε.
1030 ΧΡ. Μακρὸς τὸ κρῖναι ταῦτα χὠ λοιπὸς χρόνος.

ΗΛ. Ἄπελθε· σοὶ γὰρ ὠφέλησις οὐκ ἔνι.

ΧΡ. Ἔνεστιν· ἀλλὰ σοὶ μάθησις οὐ πάρα.

ΗΛ. Ἐλθοῦσα μητρὶ ταῦτα πάντ’ ἔξειπε σῇ.

ΧΡ. Οὐδ’ αὖ τοσοῦτον ἔχθος ἐχθαίρω σ’ ἐγώ.
1035 ΗΛ. Ἀλλ’ οὖν ἐπίστω γ’ οἷ μ’ ἀτιμίας ἄγεις.

ΧΡ. Ἀτιμίας μὲν οὔ, προμηθίας δὲ σοῦ.

ΗΛ. Τῷ σῷ δικαίῳ δῆτ’ ἐπισπέσθαι με δεῖ;

ΧΡ. Ὅταν γὰρ εὖ φρονῇς, τόθ’ ἡγήσῃ σὺ νῷν.

ΗΛ. Ἦ δεινὸν εὖ λέγουσαν ἐξαμαρτάνειν.
1040 ΧΡ. Εἴρηκας ὀρθῶς ᾧ σὺ πρόσκεισαι κακῷ.

ΗΛ. Τί δ’; οὐ δοκῶ σοι ταῦτα σὺν δίκῃ λέγειν;

ΧΡ. Ἀλλ’ ἔστιν ἔνθα χἡ δίκη βλάβην φέρει.

ΗΛ. Τούτοις ἐγὼ ζῆν τοῖς νόμοις οὐ βούλομαι.

ΧΡ. Ἀλλ’ εἰ ποήσεις ταῦτ’, ἐπαινέσεις ἐμέ.
1045 ΗΛ. Καὶ μὴν ποήσω γ’, οὐδὲν ἐκπλαγεῖσά σε.

ΧΡ. Καὶ τοῦτ’ ἀληθές, οὐδὲ βουλεύσῃ πάλιν;

ΗΛ. Βουλῆς γὰρ οὐδέν ἐστιν ἔχθιον κακῆς.

ΧΡ. Φρονεῖν ἔοικας οὐδὲν ὧν ἐγὼ λέγω.

ΗΛ. Πάλαι δέδοκται ταῦτα κοὐ νεωστί μοι.
1050 ΧΡ. Ἄπειμι τοίνυν· οὔτε γὰρ σὺ τἄμ’ ἔπη
τολμᾷς ἐπαινεῖν οὔτ’ ἐγὼ τοὺς σοὺς τρόπους.

ΗΛ. Ἀλλ’ εἴσιθ’· οὔ σοι μὴ μεθέψομαί ποτε,
οὐδ’ ἢν σφόδρ’ ἱμείρουσα τυγχάνῃς· ἐπεὶ
πολλῆς ἀνοίας καὶ τὸ θηρᾶσθαι κενά.
1055 ΧΡ. Ἀλλ’ εἰ σεαυτῇ τυγχάνεις δοκοῦσά τι
φρονεῖν, φρόνει τοιαῦθ’· ὅταν γὰρ ἐν κακοῖς
ἤδη βεβήκῃς, τἄμ’ ἐπαινέσεις ἔπη.

ΧΟ. Τί τοὺς ἄνωθεν φρονιμωτάτους οἰω- Str. 1 .
νοὺς ἐσορώμενοι τροφᾶς
1060 κηδομένους ἀφ’ ὧν τε βλά-
στωσιν ἀφ’ ὧν τ’ ὄνασιν εὕ-
ρωσι, τάδ’ οὐκ ἐπ’ ἴσας τελοῦμεν;
Ἀλλ’ οὐ τὰν Διὸς ἀστραπὰν
καὶ τὰν οὐρανίαν Θέμιν,
1065 δαρὸν οὐκ ἀπόνητοι.
Ὦ χθονία βροτοῖσι Φά-
μα, κατά μοι βόασον οἰκ-
τρὰν ὅπα τοῖς ἔνερθ’ Ἀτρεί-
δαις, ἀχόρευτα φέρουσ’ ὀνείδη·
1070 ὅτι σφιν ἤδη τὰ μὲν ἐκ δόμων νοσεῖ- Ant. 1 .
ται τὰ δὲ πρὸς τέκνων διπλῆ
φύλοπις οὐκέτ’ ἐξισοῦ-
ται φιλοτασίῳ διαί-
τᾳ· πρόδοτος δὲ μόνα σαλεύει
1075 Ἠλέκτρα, τὸν ἀεὶ πατρὸς
δειλαία στενάχουσ’, ὅπως
ἀ πάνδυρτος ἀηδών,
οὔτε τι τοῦ θανεῖν προμη-
θὴς τό τε μὴ βλέπειν ἑτοί-
1080 μα, διδύμαν ἑλοῦσ’ ἐρι-
νύν· τίς ἂν εὔπατρις ὧδε βλάστοι;
Οὐδεὶς τῶν ἀγαθῶν ζῶν κακῶς Str. 2 .
εὔκλειαν αἰσχῦναι θέλει
1085 νώνυμος, ὦ παῖ, παῖ·
ὡς καὶ σὺ πάγκλαυτον αἰ-
ῶνα κοινὸν εἵλου,

τὸ μὴ καλὸν καθοπλίσα-
σα δύο φέρειν ‹ἐν› ἑνὶ λόγῳ,
σοφά τ’ ἀρίστα τε παῖς κεκλῆσθαι.
1090 Ζῴης μοι καθύπερθεν χερὶ Ant. 2 .
πλούτῳ τε τῶν ἐχθρῶν, ὅσον
νῦν ὑπόχειρ ναίεις·
ἐπεί σ’ ἐφεύρηκα μοί-
ρᾳ μὲν οὐκ ἐν ἐσθλᾷ
1095 βεβῶσαν, ἃ δὲ μέγιστ’ ἔβλασ-
τε νόμιμα, τῶνδε φερομέναν
ἄριστα τᾷ Ζηνὸς εὐσεβείᾳ.

ΟΡ. Ἆρ’, ὦ γυναῖκες, ὀρθά τ’ εἰσηκούσαμεν
ὀρθῶς θ’ ὁδοιποροῦμεν ἔνθα χρῄζομεν;
1100 ΧΟ. Τί δ’ ἐξερευνᾷς καὶ τί βουληθεὶς πάρει;

ΟΡ. Αἴγισθον ἔνθ’ ᾤκηκεν ἱστορῶ πάλαι.

ΧΟ. Ἀλλ’ εὖ θ’ ἱκάνεις χὠ φράσας ἀζήμιος.

ΟΡ. Τίς οὖν ἂν ὑμῶν τοῖς ἔσω φράσειεν ἂν
ἡμῶν ποθεινὴν κοινόπουν παρουσίαν;
1105 ΧΟ. Ἥδ’, εἰ τὸν ἄγχιστόν γε κηρύσσειν χρεών.

ΟΡ. Ἴθ’, ὦ γύναι, δήλωσον εἰσελθοῦσ’ ὅτι
Φωκῆς ματεύουσ’ ἄνδρες Αἴγισθόν τινες.

ΗΛ. Οἴμοι τάλαιν’, οὐ δή ποθ’ ἧς ἠκούσαμεν
φήμης φέροντες ἐμφανῆ τεκμήρια;
ΟΡ. Οὐκ οἶδα τὴν σὴν κληδόν’· ἀλλά μοι γέρων
ἐφεῖτ’ Ὀρέστου Στροφίος ἀγγεῖλαι πέρι.

ΗΛ. Τί δ’ ἔστιν, ὦ ξέν’; ὥς μ’ ὑπέρχεται φόβος.

ΟΡ. Φέροντες αὐτοῦ σμικρὰ λείψαν’ ἐν βραχεῖ
τεύχει θανόντος, ὡς ὁρᾷς, κομίζομεν.
ΗΛ. Οἰ ‘γὼ τάλαινα, τοῦτ’ ἐκεῖν’, ἤδη σαφὲς
πρόχειρον ἄχθος, ὡς ἔοικε, δέρκομαι.

ΟΡ. Εἴπερ τι κλαίεις τῶν Ὀρεστείων κακῶν,
τόδ’ ἄγγος ἴσθι σῶμα τοὐκείνου στέγον.

ΗΛ. Ὦ ξεῖνε, δός νυν, πρὸς θεῶν, εἴπερ τόδε
κέκευθεν αὐτὸν τεῦχος, εἰς χεῖρας λαβεῖν,
ὅπως ἐμαυτὴν καὶ γένος τὸ πᾶν ὁμοῦ
ξὺν τῇδε κλαύσω κἀποδύρωμαι σποδῷ.

ΟΡ. Δόθ’ ἥτις ἐστί, προσφέροντες· οὐ γὰρ ὡς
ἐν δυσμενείᾳ γ’ οὖσ’ ἐπαιτεῖται τόδε,
ἀλλ’ ἢ φίλων τις, ἢ πρὸς αἵματος φύσιν.

ΗΛ. Ὦ φιλτάτου μνημεῖον ἀνθρώπων ἐμοὶ
ψυχῆς Ὀρέστου λοιπόν, ὡς ‹σ’› ἀπ’ ἐλπίδων
οὐχ ὧνπερ ἐξέπεμπον εἰσεδεξάμην.
Νῦν μὲν γὰρ οὐδὲν ὄντα βαστάζω χεροῖν,
1130 δόμων δέ σ’, ὦ παῖ, λαμπρὸν ἐξέπεμψ’ ἐγώ·
ὡς ὤφελον πάροιθεν ἐκλιπεῖν βίον,
πρὶν ἐς ξένην σε γαῖαν ἐκπέμψαι χεροῖν
κλέψασα ταῖνδε κἀνασώσασθαι φόνου,
ὅπως θανὼν ἔκεισο τῇ τόθ’ ἡμέρᾳ,
1135 τύμβου πατρῴου κοινὸν εἰληχὼς μέρος.
Νῦν δ’ ἐκτὸς οἴκων κἀπὶ γῆς ἄλλης φυγὰς
κακῶς ἀπώλου σῆς κασιγνήτης δίχα·
κοὔτ’ ἐν φίλαισι χερσὶν ἡ τάλαιν’ ἐγὼ
λουτροῖς σ’ ἐκόσμησ’, οὔτε παμφλέκτου πυρὸς
1140 ἀνειλόμην, ὡς εἰκός, ἄθλιον βάρος·
ἀλλ’ ἐν ξένῃσι χερσὶ κηδευθεὶς τάλας
σμικρὸς προσήκεις ὄγκος ἐν σμικρῷ κύτει.
Οἴμοι τάλαινα τῆς ἐμῆς πάλαι τροφῆς
ἀνωφελήτου, τὴν ἐγὼ θάμ’ ἀμφὶ σοὶ
1145 πόνῳ γλυκεῖ παρέσχον· οὔτε γάρ ποτε
μητρὸς σύ γ’ ἦσθα μᾶλλον ἢ κἀμοῦ φίλος,
οὔθ’ οἱ κατ’ οἶκον ἦσαν, ἀλλ’ ἐγὼ τροφός·
ἐγὼ δ’ ἀδελφὴ σοὶ προσηυδώμην ἀεί.
Νῦν δ’ ἐκλέλοιπε ταῦτ’ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ μιᾷ
1150 θανόντι σὺν σοί· πάντα γὰρ συναρπάσας
θύελλ’ ὅπως βέβηκας· οἴχεται πατήρ·
τέθνηκ’ ἐγώ σοι· φροῦδος αὐτὸς εἶ θανών·
γελῶσι δ’ ἐχθροί· μαίνεται δ’ ὑφ’ ἡδονῆς
μήτηρ ἀμήτωρ, ἧς ἐμοὶ σὺ πολλάκις
1155 φήμας λάθρᾳ προὔπεμπες ὡς φανούμενος
τιμωρὸς αὐτός. Ἀλλὰ ταῦθ’ ὁ δυστυχὴς
δαίμων ὁ σός τε κἀμὸς ἐξαφείλετο,
ὅς σ’ ὧδέ μοι προὔπεμψεν, ἀντὶ φιλτάτης
μορφῆς σποδόν τε καὶ σκιὰν ἀνωφελῆ.
1160 Οἴμοι μοι.
Ὦ δέμας οἰκτρόν. Φεῦ, φεῦ.
Ὦ δεινοτάτας, οἴμοι μοι,
πεμφθεὶς κελεύθους, φίλταθ’, ὥς μ’ ἀπώλεσας·
ἀπώλεσας δῆτ’, ὦ κασίγνητον κάρα.

Τοιγὰρ σὺ δέξαι μ’ ἐς τὸ σὸν τόδε στέγος,
τὴν μηδὲν εἰς τὸ μηδέν, ὡς σὺν σοὶ κάτω
ναίω τὸ λοιπόν· καὶ γάρ, ἡνίκ’ ἦσθ’ ἄνω,
ξὺν σοὶ μετεῖχον τῶν ἴσων· καὶ νῦν ποθῶ
τοῦ σοῦ θανοῦσα μὴ ἀπολείπεσθαι τάφου·
τοὺς γὰρ θανόντας οὐχ ὁρῶ λυπουμένους.

ΧΟ. Θνητοῦ πέφυκας πατρός, Ἠλέκτρα, φρόνει·
θνητὸς δ’ Ὀρέστης· ὥστε μὴ λίαν στένε·
πᾶσιν γὰρ ἡμῖν τοῦτ’ ὀφείλεται παθεῖν.

ΟΡ. Φεῦ φεῦ· τί λέξω; ποῖ λόγων ἀμηχανῶν
ἔλθω; κρατεῖν γὰρ οὐκέτι γλώσσης σθένω.

ΗΛ. Τί δ’ ἔσχες ἄλγος; πρὸς τί τοῦτ’ εἰπὼν κυρεῖς;

ΟΡ. Ἦ σὸν τὸ κλεινὸν εἶδος Ἠλέκτρας τόδε;

ΗΛ. Τόδ’ ἔστ’ ἐκεῖνο, καὶ μάλ’ ἀθλίως ἔχον.

ΟΡ. Οἴμοι ταλαίνης ἆρα τῆσδε συμφορᾶς.
ΗΛ. Οὐ δή ποτ’, ὦ ξέν’, ἀμφ’ ἐμοὶ στένεις τάδε;

ΟΡ. Ὦ σῶμ’ ἀτίμως κἀθέως ἐφθαρμένον.

ΗΛ. Οὗτοι ποτ’ ἄλλην ἢ ‘μὲ δυσφημεῖς, ξένε.

ΟΡ. Φεῦ τῆς ἀνύμφου δυσμόρου τε σῆς τροφῆς.

ΗΛ. Τί μοί ποτ’, ὦ ξέν’, ὦδ’ ἐπισκοπῶν στένεις;
1185 ΟΡ. Ὅσ’ οὐκ ἄρ’ ᾔδειν τῶν ἐμῶν ἐγὼ κακῶν.

ΗΛ. Ἐν τῷ διέγνως τοῦτο τῶν εἰρημένων;

ΟΡ. Ὁρῶν σε πολλοῖς ἐμπρέπουσαν ἄλγεσιν.

ΗΛ. Καὶ μὴν ὁρᾷς γε παῦρα τῶν ἐμῶν κακῶν.

ΟΡ. Καὶ πῶς γένοιτ’ ἂν τῶνδ’ ἔτ’ ἐχθίω βλέπειν;
1190 ΗΛ. Ὀθούνεκ’ εἰμὶ τοῖς φονεῦσι σύντροφος.

ΟΡ. Τοῖς τοῦ; πόθεν τοῦτ’ ἐξεσήμηνας κακόν;

ΗΛ. Τοῖς πατρός· εἶτα τοῖσδε δουλεύω βίᾳ.

ΟΡ. Τίς γάρ σ’ ἀνάγκῃ τῇδε προτρέπει βροτῶν;

ΗΛ. Μήτηρ καλεῖται, μητρὶ δ’ οὐδὲν ἐξισοῖ.
1195 ΟΡ. Τί δρῶσα; πότερα χερσὶν ἢ λύμῃ βίου;

ΗΛ. Καὶ χερσὶ καὶ λύμαισι καὶ πᾶσιν κακοῖς.

ΟΡ. Οὐδ’ οὐπαρήξων οὐδ’ ὁ κωλύσων πάρα;

ΗΛ. Οὐ δῆθ’· ὃς ἦν γάρ μοι, σὺ προὔθηκας σποδόν.

ΟΡ. Ὦ δύσποτμ’, ὡς ὁρῶν σ’ ἐποικτίρω πάλαι.
1200 ΗΛ. Μόνος βροτῶν νυν ἴσθ’ ἐποικτίρας ποτέ.

ΟΡ. Μόνος γὰρ ἥκω τοῖσι σοῖς ἀλγῶν κακοῖς.

ΗΛ. Οὐ δή ποθ’ ἡμῖν ξυγγενὴς ἥκεις ποθέν;

ΟΡ. Ἐγὼ φράσαιμ’ ἄν, εἰ τὸ τῶνδ’ εὔνουν πάρα.

ΗΛ. Ἀλλ’ ἔστιν εὔνουν, ὥστε πρὸς πιστὰς ἐρεῖς.
1205 ΟΡ. Μέθες τόδ’ ἄγγος νῦν, ὅπως τὸ πᾶν μάθῃς.

ΗΛ. Μὴ δῆτα πρὸς θεῶν τοῦτό μ’ ἐργάσῃ, ξένε.

ΟΡ. Πείθου λέγοντι κοὐχ ἁμαρτήσῃ ποτέ.

ΗΛ. Μή, πρὸς γενείου, μὴ ‘ξέλῃ τὰ φίλτατα.

ΟΡ. Οὔ φημ’ ἐάσειν.

ΗΛ. Ὦ τάλαιν’ ἐγὼ σέθεν,
1210 Ὀρέστα, τῆς σῆς εἰ στερήσομαι ταφῆς.

ΟΡ. Εὔφημα φώνει· πρὸς δίκης γὰρ οὐ στένεις.

ΗΛ. Πῶς τὸν θανόντ’ ἀδελφὸν οὐ δίκῃ στένω;

ΟΡ. Οὔ σοι προσήκει τήνδε προσφωνεῖν φάτιν.

ΗΛ. Οὕτως ἄτιμός εἰμι τοῦ τεθνηκότος;
1215 ΟΡ. Ἄτιμος οὐδενὸς σύ· τοῦτο δ’ οὐχὶ σόν.

ΗΛ. Εἴπερ γ’ Ὀρέστου σῶμα βαστάζω τόδε.

ΟΡ. Ἀλλ’ οὐκ Ὀρέστου, πλὴν λόγῳ γ’ ἠσκημένον.

ΗΛ. Ποῦ δ’ ἔστ’ ἐκείνου τοῦ ταλαιπώρου τάφος;

ΟΡ. Οὐκ ἔστι· τοῦ γὰρ ζῶντος οὐκ ἔστιν τάφος.
1220 ΗΛ. Πῶς εἶπας, ὦ παῖ;

ΟΡ. Ψεῦδος οὐδὲν ὧν λέγω.

ΗΛ. Ἦ ζῇ γὰρ ἀνήρ;

ΟΡ. Εἴπερ ἔμψυχός γ’ ἐγώ.

ΗΛ. ἦ γὰρ σὺ κεῖνος;

ΟΡ. Τήνδε προσβλέψασά μου
σφραγῖδα πατρὸς ἔκμαθ’ εἰ σαφῆ λέγω.

ΗΛ. Ὦ φίλτατον φῶς.

ΟΡ. Φίλτατον, ξυμμαρτυρῶ.
1225 ΗΛ. Ὦ φθέγμ’, ἀφίκου;

ΟΡ. Μηκέτ’ ἄλλοθεν πύθῃ

ΗΛ. Ἔχω σε χερσίν;

ΟΡ. Ὡς τὰ λοίπ’ ἔχοις ἀεί.

ΗΛ. Ὦ φίλταται γυναῖκες, ὦ πολίτιδες,
ὁρᾶτ’ Ὀρέστην τόνδε, μηχαναῖσι μὲν
θανόντα, νῦν δὲ μηχαναῖς σεσωσμένον.
1230 ΧΟ. Ὁρῶμεν, ὦ παῖ, κἀπὶ συμφοραῖσί μοι
γεγηθὸς ἕρπει δάκρυον ὀμμάτων ἄπο.

ΗΛ. Ἰὼ γοναί, Str.
γοναὶ σωμάτων ἐμοὶ φιλτάτων,
ἐμόλετ’ ἀρτίως,
1235 ἐφεύρετ’, ἦλθετ’, εἴδεθ’ οὓς ἐχρῄζετε.

ΟΡ. Πάρεσμεν· ἀλλὰ σῖγ’ ἔχουσα πρόσμενε.

ΗΛ. Τί δ’ ἔστιν;

ΟΡ. Σιγᾶν ἄμεινον, μή τις ἔνδοθεν κλύῃ.

ΗΛ. Οὐ τὰν Ἄρτεμιν τὰν αἰὲν ἀδμήταν,
1240 τόδε μὲν οὔ ποτ’ ἀξιώσω τρέσαι
περισσὸν ἄχθος ἔνδον
γυναικῶν ὂν αἰεί.

ΟΡ. Ὅρα γε μὲν δὴ κἀν γυναιξὶν ὡς Ἄρης
ἔνεστιν· εὖ δ’ ἔξοισθα πειραθεῖσά που.

ΗΛ. Ὀτοτοτοτοῖ τοτοῖ,
ἀνέφελον ἐνέβαλες οὔ ποτε καταλύσιμον,
οὐδέ ποτε λησόμενον ἀμέτερον
οἷον ἔφυ κακόν.

ΟΡ. Ἔξοιδα καὶ ταῦτ’· ἀλλ’ ὅταν παρουσία
φράζῃ, τότ’ ἔργων τῶνδε μεμνῆσθαι χρεών.

ΗΛ. Ὁ πᾶς ἐμοί, Ant.
ὁ πᾶς ἂν πρέποι παρὼν ἐννέπειν
τάδε δίκᾳ χρόνος·
μόλις γὰρ ἔσχον νῦν ἐλεύθερον στόμα.

ΟΡ. Ξύμφημι κἀγώ· τοιγαροῦν σῴζου τόδε.

ΗΛ. Τί δρῶσα;

ΟΡ. Οὔ μή ‘στι καιρός, μὴ μακρὰν βούλου λέγειν.
ΗΛ. Τίς οὖν ἀξίαν σοῦ γε πεφηνότος
μεταβάλοιτ’ ἂν ὧδε σιγὰν λόγων;
ἐπεί σε νῦν ἀφράστως
ἀέλπτως τ’ ἐσεῖδον.

ΟΡ. Τότ’ εἶδες, ὅτε θεοί μ’ ˘ – ˘ – ˘ –
˘ – ˘ – ˘ – ˘ ὤτρυναν μολεῖν.

ΗΛ. Ἔφρασας ὑπερτέραν
τᾶς πάρος ἔτι χάριτος, εἴ σε θεὸς ἐπόρισεν
ἀμέτερα πρὸς μέλαθρα· δαιμόνιον
αὐτὸ τίθημ’ ἐγώ.

ΟΡ. Τὰ μέν σ’ ὀκνῶ χαίρουσαν εἰργαθεῖν, τὰ δὲ
δέδοικα λίαν ἡδονῇ νικωμένην.

ΗΛ. Ἰὼ χρόνῳ μακρῷ φιλτάταν ὁδὸν Epode.
ἐπαξιώσας ὧδέ μοι φανῆναι,
μή τί με, πολύπονον ὧδ’ ἰδὼν -

ΟΡ. Τί μὴ ποήσω;

ΗΛ. μή μ’ ἀποστερήσῃς
τῶν σῶν προσώπων ἡδονὰν μεθέσθαι.

ΟΡ. Ἧ κάρτα κἂν ἄλλοισι θυμοίμην ἰδών.

ΗΛ. Ξυναινεῖς;
ΟΡ. Τί μὴν οὔ;

ΗΛ. Ὦ φίλ’, ἔκλυον ἂν ἐγὼ οὐδ’ ἂν ἤλπισ’ αὐδάν·

ἔσχον ὀργὰν ἄναυδον
οὐδὲ σὺν βοᾷ κλύουσ’ ἀ τάλαινα.
Νῦν δ’ ἔχω σε· προὐφάνης δὲ
φιλτάταν ἔχων πρόσοψιν,
ἃς ἐγὼ οὐδ’ ἂν ἐν κακοῖς λαθοίμαν.

ΟΡ. Τὰ μὲν περισσεύοντα τῶν λόγων ἄφες,
καὶ μήτε μήτηρ ὡς κακὴ δίδασκέ με
μήθ’ ὡς πατρῴαν κτῆσιν Αἴγισθος δόμων
ἀντλεῖ, τὰ δ’ ἐκχεῖ, τὰ δὲ διασπείρει μάτην·
χρόνου γὰρ ἄν σοι καιρὸν ἐξείργοι λόγος.
Ἃ δ’ ἁρμόσει μοι τῷ παρόντι νῦν χρόνῳ
σήμαιν’, ὅπου φανέντες ἢ κεκρυμμένοι
γελῶντας ἐχθροὺς παύσομεν τῇ νῦν ὁδῷ.
Οὕτω δ’ ὅπως μήτηρ σε μὴ ‘πιγνώσεται
φαιδρῷ προσώπῳ νῷν ἐπελθόντοιν δόμους·
ἀλλ’ ὡς ἐπ’ ἄτῃ τῇ μάτην λελεγμένῃ
στέναζ’· ὅταν γὰρ εὐτυχήσωμεν, τότε
χαίρειν παρέσται καὶ γελᾶν ἐλευθέρως.

ΗΛ. Ἀλλ’, ὦ κασίγνηθ’ ὧδ’ ὅπως καὶ σοὶ φίλον,
καὶ τοὐμὸν ἔσται τῇδ’· ἐπεὶ τὰς ἡδονὰς
πρὸς σοῦ λαβοῦσα κοὐκ ἐμὰς ἐκτησάμην.
Κοὐδ’ ἄν σε λυπήσασα δεξαίμην βραχὺ
αὐτὴ μέγ’ εὑρεῖν κέρδος· οὐ γὰρ ἂν καλῶς
ὑπηρετοίμην τῷ παρόντι δαίμονι.
Ἀλλ’ οἶσθα μὲν τἀνθένδε, πῶς γὰρ οὔ; κλύων
ὀθούνεκ’ Αἴγισθος μὲν οὐ κατὰ στέγας,
μήτηρ δ’ ἐν οἴκοις· ἢν σὺ μὴ δείσῃς ποθ’ ὡς
γέλωτι τοὐμὸν φαιδρὸν ὄψεται κάρα·
μῖσός τε γὰρ παλαιὸν ἐντέτηκέ μοι,
κἀπεί σ’ ἐσεῖδον, οὔ ποτ’ ἐκλήξω χαρᾶς
δακρυρροοῦσα. Πῶς γὰρ ἂν λήξαιμ’ ἐγώ,
ἥτις μιᾷ σε τῇδ’ ὁδῷ θανόντα τε

καὶ ζῶντ’ ἐσεῖδον; εἴργασαι δέ μ’ ἄσκοπα,
ὥστ’, εἰ πατήρ μοι ζῶν ἵκοιτο, μηκέτ’ ἂν
τέρας νομίζειν αὐτό, πιστεύειν δ’ ὁρᾶν.
Ὅτ’ οὖν τοιαύτην ἡμὶν ἐξήκεις ὁδὸν,
ἄρχ’ αὐτὸς ὥς σοι θυμός· ὡς ἐγὼ μόνη
οὐκ ἂν δυοῖν ἥμαρτον· ἢ γὰρ ἂν καλῶς
ἔσωσ’ ἐμαυτήν, ἢ καλῶς ἀπωλόμην.

ΟΡ. Σιγᾶν ἐπῄνεσ’· ὡς ἐπ’ ἐξόδῳ κλύω
τῶν ἔνδοθεν χωροῦντος.

ΗΛ. Εἴσιτ’, ὦ ξένοι,
ἄλλως τε καὶ φέροντες οἷ’ ἂν οὔτε τις
δόμων ἀπώσαιτ’ οὔτ’ ἂν ἡσθείη λαβών.

ΠΑ. Ὦ πλεῖστα μῶροι καὶ φρενῶν τητώμενοι,
πότερα παρ’ οὐδὲν τοῦ βίου κήδεσθ’ ἔτι;
ἢ νοῦς ἔνεστιν οὔτις ὑμὶν ἐγγενὴς,
ὅτ’ οὐ παρ’ αὐτοῖς, ἀλλ’ ἐν αὐτοῖσιν κακοῖς
τοῖσιν μεγίστοις ὄντες οὐ γιγνώσκετε;
Ἀλλ’ εἰ σταθμοῖσι τοῖσδε μὴ ‘κύρουν ἐγὼ
πάλαι φυλάσσων, ἦν ἂν ὑμὶν ἐν δόμοις
τὰ δρώμεν’ ὑμῶν πρόσθεν ἢ τὰ σώματα·
νῦν δ’ εὐλάβειαν τῶνδε προὐθέμην ἐγώ.
Καὶ νῦν, ἀπαλλαχθέντε τῶν μακρῶν λόγων
καὶ τῆς ἀπλήστου τῆσδε σὺν χαρᾷ βοῆς,
εἴσω παρέλθεθ’· ὡς τὸ μὲν μέλλειν κακὸν
ἐν τοῖς τοιούτοις ἔστ’, ἀπηλλάχθαι δ’ ἀκμή.

ΟΡ. Πῶς οὖν ἔχει τἀντεῦθεν εἰσιόντι μοι;
ΠΑ. Καλῶς· ὑπάρχει γάρ σε μὴ γνῶναί τινα.

ΟΡ. Ἥγγειλας, ὡς ἔοικεν, ὡς τεθνηκότα.

ΠΑ. Εἷς τῶν ἐν Ἅιδου μάνθαν’ ἐνθάδ’ ὢν ἀνήρ.

ΟΡ. Χαίρουσιν ἐν τούτοισιν; ἢ τίνες λόγοι;

ΠΑ. Τελουμένων εἴποιμ’ ἄν· ὡς δὲ νῦν ἔχει,
καλῶς τὰ κείνων πάντα, καὶ τὰ μὴ καλῶς.

ΗΛ. Τίς οὗτός ἐστ’, ἀδελφέ; πρὸς θεῶν, φράσον.

ΟΡ. Οὐχὶ ξυνίης;

ΗΛ. Οὐδέ γ’ ἐς θυμὸν φέρω.

ΟΡ. Οὐκ οἶσθ’ ὅτῳ μ’ ἔδωκας ἐς χέρας ποτέ;

ΗΛ. Ποίῳ; τί φωνεῖς;

ΟΡ. Οὗ τὸ Φωκέων πέδον
ὑπεξεπέμφθην σῇ προμηθίᾳ χεροῖν.

ΗΛ. Ἦ κεῖνος οὗτος ὅν ποτ᾽ ἐκ πολλῶν ἐγὼ
μόνον προσεῦρον πιστὸν ἐν πατρὸς φόνῳ;

ΟΡ. Ὅδ᾽ ἐστί· μή μ᾽ ἔλεγχε πλείοσιν λόγοις.

ΗΛ. Ὦ φίλτατον φῶς, ὦ μόνος σωτὴρ δόμων
Ἀγαμέμνονος, πῶς ἦλθες; ἦ σὺ κεῖνος εἶ
ὃς τόνδε κἄμ᾽ ἔσωσας ἐκ πολλῶν πόνων;
Ὦ φίλταται μὲν χεῖρες, ἥδιστον δ᾽ ἔχων
ποδῶν ὑπηρέτημα, πῶς οὕτω πάλαι
ξυνών μ᾽ ἔληθες οὐδ᾽ ἔφαινες, ἀλλά με
λόγοις ἀπώλλυς, ἔργ᾽ ἔχων ἥδιστ᾽ ἐμοί;
Χαῖρ᾽, ὦ πάτερ· πατέρα γὰρ εἰσορᾶν δοκῶ·
χαῖρ᾽· ἴσθι δ᾽ ὡς μάλιστά σ᾽ ἀνθρώπων ἐγὼ
ἦχθηρα κἀφίλησ᾽ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ μιᾷ.

ΠΑ. Ἀρκεῖν δοκεῖ μοι· τοὺς γὰρ ἐν μέσῳ λόγους,
πολλαὶ κυκλοῦνται νύκτες ἡμέραι τ᾽ ἴσαι
αἳ ταῦτά σοι δείξουσιν, Ἠλέκτρα, σαφῆ.
Σφῷν δ᾽ ἐννέπω γε τοῖν παρεστώτοιν ὅτι
νῦν καιρὸς ἔρδειν· νῦν Κλυταιμήστρα μόνη,

νῦν οὔτις ἀνδρῶν ἔνδον· εἰ δ’ ἐφέξετον,
φροντίζεθ’ ὡς τούτοις τε καὶ σοφωτέροις
ἄλλοισι τούτων πλείοσιν μαχούμενοι.

ΟΡ. Οὐκ ἂν μακρῶν ἔθ’ ἡμὶν οὐδὲν ἂν λόγων,
Πυλάδη, τόδ’ εἴη τοὔργον, ἀλλ’ ὅσον τάχος
χωρεῖν ἔσω, πατρῷα προσκύσανθ’ ἕδη
θεῶν, ὅσοι‹περ› πρόπυλα ναίουσιν τάδε.

ΗΛ. Ἄναξ Ἄπολλον, ἵλεως αὐτοῖν κλύε,
ἐμοῦ τε πρὸς τούτοισιν, ἥ σε πολλὰ δὴ
ἀφ’ ὧν ἔχοιμι λιπαρεῖ προὔστην χερί.
Νῦν δ’, ὦ Λύκει’ Ἄπολλον, ἐξ οἵων ἔχω
αἰτῶ, προπίτνω, λίσσομαι, γενοῦ πρόφρων
ἡμῖν ἀρωγὸς τῶνδε τῶν βουλευμάτων,
καὶ δεῖξον ἀνθρώποισι τἀπιτίμια
τῆς δυσσεβείας οἷα δωροῦνται θεοί.

ΧΟ. Ἴδεθ’ ὅπου προνέμεται Str.
τὸ δυσέριστον αἷμα φυσῶν Ἄρης·
βεβᾶσιν ἄρτι δωμάτων ὑπόστεγοι
μετάδρομοι κακῶν πανουργημάτων
ἄφυκτοι κύνες·
ὥστ’ οὐ μακρὰν ἔτ’ ἀμμενεῖ
τοὐμὸν φρενῶν ὄνειρον αἰωρούμενον.
Παράγεται γὰρ ἐνέρων Ant.
δολιόπους ἀρωγὸς εἴσω στέγας,
ἀρχαιόπλουτα πατρὸς εἰς ἑδώλια,
νεακόνητον αἷμα χειροῖν ἔχων·
ὁ Μαίας δὲ παῖς
Ἑρμῆς σφ’ ἄγει δόλον σκότῳ
κρύψας πρὸς αὐτὸ τέρμα κοὐκέτ’ ἀμμένει.

ΗΛ. Ὦ φίλταται γυναῖκες, ἄνδρες αὐτίκα
τελοῦσι τοὔργον· ἀλλὰ σῖγα πρόσμενε.
1400 ΧΟ. Πῶς δή; τί νῦν πράσσουσιν;

ΗΛ. Ἡ μὲν ἐς τάφον
λέβητα κοσμεῖ, τὼ δ’ ἐφέστατον πέλας.

ΧΟ. Σὺ δ’ ἐκτὸς ᾔξας πρὸς τί;

ΗΛ. Φρουρήσουσ’ ὅπως
Αἴγισθος ‹αὖθις› μὴ λάθῃ μολὼν ἔσω.

ΚΛ. Αἰαῖ. Ἰὼ στέγαι
1405 φίλων ἔρημοι, τῶν δ’ ἀπολλύντων πλέαι.

ΗΛ. Βοᾷ τις ἔνδον· οὐκ ἀκούετ’, ὦ φίλαι;

ΧΟ. Ἤκουσ’ ἀνήκουστα δύστανος, ὥστε φρῖξαι. Str.

ΚΛ. Οἴμοι τάλαιν’· Αἴγισθε, ποῦ ποτ’ ὢν κυρεῖς;

ΗΛ. Ἰδοὺ μάλ’ αὖ θροεῖ τις.
1410 ΚΛ. Ὦ τέκνον, τέκνον,
οἴκτιρε τὴν τεκοῦσαν.

ΗΛ. Ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἐκ σέθεν
ὠκτίρεθ’ οὗτος οὔθ’ ὁ γεννήσας πατήρ.

ΧΟ. Ὦ πόλις, ὦ γενεὰ τάλαινα, νῦν σοι
μοῖρα καθαμερία φθίνει, φθίνει.
1415 ΚΛ. Ὤμοι πέπληγμαι.

ΗΛ. Παῖσον, εἰ σθένεις, διπλῆν.

ΚΛ. Ὤμοι μάλ’ αὖθις.

ΗΛ. Εἰ γὰρ Αἰγίσθῳ θ’ ὁμοῦ.

ΧΟ. Τελοῦσ’ ἀραί· ζῶσιν οἱ γᾶς ὑπαὶ κείμενοι·
1420 παλίρρυτον γὰρ αἷμ’ ὑπεξαιροῦσι τῶν
κτανόντων οἱ πάλαι θανόντες.

ΧΟ. Καὶ μὴν πάρεισιν οἵδε· φοινία δὲ χεὶρ
στάζει θυηλῆς Ἄρεος, οὐδ’ ἔχω ψέγειν.

ΗΛ. Ὀρέστα, πῶς κυρεῖ‹τε›;

ΟΡ. Τἀν δόμοισι μὲν
1425 καλῶς, Ἀπόλλων εἰ καλῶς ἐθέσπισεν.

ΗΛ. Τέθνηκεν ἡ τάλαινα;

ΟΡ. Μηκέτ’ ἐκφοβοῦ
μητρῷον ὥς σε λῆμ’ ἀτιμάσει ποτέ.

ΗΛ. ˘ – ˘ – ˘ –
˘ – ˘ – ˘ – ˘ – ˘ – ˘ –

ΟΡ. ˘ – ˘ – ˘ – ˘ – ˘ – ˘ –

ΧΟ. Παύσασθε. Λεύσσω γὰρ Αἴγισθον ἐκ προδήλου. Ant.

ΟΡ. ˘ – ˘ – ˘ – ˘ – ˘ –
1430 ΗΛ. Ὦ παῖδες, οὐκ ἄψορρον;

ΟΡ. Εἰσορᾶτέ που
τὸν ἄνδρ’; ἐφ’ ἡμῖν οὗτος;

ΗΛ. Ἐκ προαστίου
χωρεῖ γεγηθὼς ¯ ˘ – ˘ – ˘ –

ΧΟ. Βᾶτε κατ’ ἀντιθύρων ὅσον τάχιστα,
νῦν, τὰ πρὶν εὖ θέμενοι, τάδ’ ὡς πάλιν.
1435 ΟΡ. Θάρσει, τελοῦμεν.

ΗΛ. Ἧι νοεῖς ἔπειγέ νυν.

ΟΡ. Καὶ δὴ βέβηκα.

ΗΛ. Τἀνθάδ’ ἂν μέλοιτ’ ἐμοί.

ΧΟ. Δι’ ὠτὸς ἂν παῦρά γ’ ὡς ἠπίως ἐννέπειν
1440 πρὸς ἄνδρα τόνδε συμφέροι, λαθραῖον ὡς
ὀρούσῃ πρὸς δίκας ἀγῶνα.

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ
Τίς οἶδεν ὑμῶν ποῦ ποθ’ οἱ Φωκῆς ξένοι
οὓς φασ’ Ὀρέστην ἡμὶν ἀγγεῖλαι βίον
λελοιπόθ’ ἱππικοῖσιν ἐν ναυαγίοις;
1445 Σέ τοι, σὲ κρίνω, ναὶ σὲ τὴν ἐν τῷ πάρος
χρόνῳ θρασεῖαν· ὡς μάλιστά σοι μέλειν
οἶμαι, μάλιστα δ’ ἂν κατειδυῖαν φράσαι.

ΗΛ. Ἔξοιδα· πῶς γὰρ οὐχί; συμφορᾶς γὰρ ἂν
ἔξωθεν εἴην τῶν ἐμῶν γε φιλτάτων.
1450 ΑΙ. Ποῦ δῆτ’ ἂν εἶεν οἱ ξένοι; δίδασκέ με.

ΗΛ. Ἔνδον· φίλης γὰρ προξένου κατήνυσαν.

ΑΙ. Ἦ καὶ θανόντ’ ἤγγειλαν ὡς ἐτητύμως;

ΗΛ. Οὔκ, ἀλλὰ κἀπέδειξαν, οὐ λόγῳ μόνον.

ΑΙ. Πάρεστ’ ἄρ’ ἡμῖν ὥστε κἀμφανῆ μαθεῖν;
1455 ΗΛ. Πάρεστι δῆτα καὶ μάλ’ ἄζηλος θέα.

ΑΙ. Ἦ πολλὰ χαίρειν μ’ εἶπας οὐκ εἰωθότως.

ΗΛ. Χαίροις ἄν, εἴ σοι χαρτὰ τυγχάνει τάδε.

ΑΙ. Σιγᾶν ἄνωγα κἀναδεικνύναι πύλας
πᾶσιν Μυκηναίοισιν Ἀργείοις θ’ ὁρᾶν,
1460 ὡς εἴ τις αὐτῶν ἐλπίσιν κεναῖς πάρος
ἐξῄρετ’ ἀνδρὸς τοῦδε, νῦν ὁρῶν νεκρὸν
στόμια δέχηται τἀμά, μηδὲ πρὸς βίαν
ἐμοῦ κολαστοῦ προστυχὼν φύσῃ φρένας.

ΗΛ. Καὶ δὴ τελεῖται τἀπ’ ἐμοῦ· τῷ γὰρ χρόνῳ
1465 νοῦν ἔσχον, ὥστε συμφέρειν τοῖς κρείσσοσιν.

ΑΙ. Ὦ Ζεῦ, δέδορκα φάσμ’ ἄνευ φθόνου μὲν οὐ
πεπτωκός· εἰ δ’ ἔπεστι νέμεσις, οὐ λέγω.
Χαλᾶτε πᾶν κάλυμμ’ ἀπ’ ὀφθαλμῶν, ὅπως
τὸ συγγενές γε κἀπ’ ἐμοῦ θρήνων τύχῃ.
1470 ΟΡ. Αὐτὸς σὺ βάσταζ’· οὐκ ἐμὸν τόδ’, ἀλλὰ σόν,
τὸ ταῦθ’ ὁρᾶν τε καὶ προσηγορεῖν φίλους.

ΑΙ. Ἀλλ’ εὖ παραινεῖς κἀπιπείσομαι· σὺ δέ,
εἴ που κατ’ οἶκόν μοι Κλυταιμήστρα, κάλει.

ΟΡ. Αὕτη πέλας σοῦ· μηκέτ’ ἄλλοσε σκόπει.
1475 ΑΙ. Οἴμοι, τί λεύσσω;

ΟΡ. Τίνα φοβῇ; τίν’ ἀγνοεῖς;

ΑΙ. Τίνων ποτ’ ἀνδρῶν ἐν μέσοις ἀρκυστάτοις
πέπτωχ’ ὁ τλήμων;

ΟΡ. Οὐ γὰρ αἰσθάνῃ πάλαι
ζῶν τοῖς θανοῦσιν οὔνεκ’ ἀνταυδᾷς ἴσα;

ΑΙ. Οἴμοι, ξυνῆκα τοὔπος· οὐ γὰρ ἔσθ’ ὅπως
1480 ὅδ’ οὐκ Ὀρέστης ἔσθ’ ὁ προσφωνῶν ἐμέ.

ΟΡ. Καὶ μάντις ὢν ἄριστος ἐσφάλλου πάλαι;

ΑΙ. Ὅλωλα δὴ δείλαιος. Ἀλλά μοι πάρες
κἂν σμικρὸν εἰπεῖν.

ΗΛ. Μὴ πέρα λέγειν ἔα,
πρὸς θεῶν, ἀδελφέ, μηδὲ μηκύνειν λόγους.
1485 Τί γὰρ βροτῶν ἂν σὺν κακοῖς μεμιγμένων
θνῄσκειν ὁ μέλλων τοῦ χρόνου κέρδος φέροι;
Ἀλλ’ ὡς τάχιστα κτεῖνε, καὶ κτανὼν πρόθες
ταφεῦσιν ὧν τόνδ’ εἰκός ἐστι τυγχάνειν,

ἄποπτον ἡμῶν· ὡς ἐμοὶ τόδ’ ἂν κακῶν
1490 μόνον γένοιτο τῶν πάλαι λυτήριον.

ΟΡ. Χωροῖς ἂν εἴσω σὺν τάχει· λόγων γὰρ οὐ
νῦν ἐστιν ἀγών, ἀλλὰ σῆς ψυχῆς πέρι.

ΑΙ. Τί δ’ ἐς δόμους ἄγεις με; πῶς, τόδ’ εἰ καλὸν
τοὔργον, σκότου δεῖ, κοὐ πρόχειρος εἶ κτανεῖν;
1495 ΟΡ. Μὴ τάσσε· χώρει δ’ ἔνθαπερ κατέκτανες
πατέρα τὸν ἀμόν, ὡς ‹ἂν› ἐν ταὐτῷ θάνῃς.

ΑΙ. Ἦ πᾶσ’ ἀνάγκη τήνδε τὴν στέγην ἰδεῖν
τά τ’ ὄντα καὶ μέλλοντα Πελοπιδῶν κακά;

ΟΡ. Τὰ γοῦν σ’· ἐγώ σοι μάντις εἰμὶ τῶνδ’ ἄκρος.
1500 ΑΙ. Ἀλλ’ οὐ πατρῴαν τὴν τέχνην ἐκόμπασας.

ΟΡ. Πόλλ’ ἀντιφωνεῖς, ἡ δ’ ὁδὸς βραδύνεται·
ἀλλ’ ἕρφ’.

ΑΙ. Ὑφηγοῦ.

ΟΡ. Σοὶ βαδιστέον πάρος.

ΑΙ. Ἦ μὴ φύγω σε;

ΟΡ. Μὴ μὲν οὖν καθ’ ἡδονὴν
θάνῃς· φυλάξαι δεῖ με τοῦτό σοι πικρόν.
1505 Χρῆν δ’ εὐθὺς εἶναι τήνδε τοῖς πᾶσιν δίκην,
ὅστις πέρα πράσσειν γε τῶν νόμων θέλει,
κτείνειν· τὸ γὰρ πανοῦργον οὐκ ἂν ἦν πολύ.

ΧΟ. Ὦ σπέρμ’ Ἀτρέως, ὡς πολλὰ παθὸν
δι’ ἐλευθερίας μόλις ἐξῆλθες
1510 τῇ νῦν ὁρμῇ τελεωθέν.

Οιδίπους επί Κολωνώ - OEDIPUS AT COLONUS

ΟΙΔΙΠΟΥΣ
Τέκνον τυφλοῦ γέροντος, Ἀντιγόνη, τίνας
χώρους ἀφίγμεθ’ ἢ τίνων ἀνδρῶν πόλιν;
τίς τὸν πλανήτην Οἰδίπουν καθ’ ἡμέραν
τὴν νῦν σπανιστοῖς δέξεται δωρήμασιν,
5 σμικρὸν μὲν ἐξαιτοῦντα, τοῦ μικροῦ δ’ ἔτι
μεῖον φέροντα, καὶ τόδ’ ἐξαρκοῦν ἐμοί;
στέργειν γὰρ αἱ πάθαι με χὠ χρόνος ξυνὼν
μακρὸς διδάσκει, καὶ τὸ γενναῖον τρίτον.
Ἀλλ’, ὦ τέκνον, θάκησιν εἴ τινα βλέπεις
10 ἢ πρὸς βεβήλοις ἢ πρὸς ἄλσεσιν θεῶν,
στῆσόν με κἀξίδρυσον, ὡς πυθοίμεθα
ὅπου ποτ’ ἐσμέν· μανθάνειν γὰρ ἥκομεν
ξένοι πρὸς ἀστῶν, ἃν ‹δ’› ἀκούσωμεν τελεῖν.

ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΗ
Πάτερ ταλαίπωρ’ Οἰδίπους, πύργοι μὲν οἳ
15 πόλιν στέγουσιν, ὡς ἀπ’ ὀμμάτων, πρόσω·
χῶρος δ’ ὅδ’ ἱρός, ὡς σάφ’ εἰκάσαι, βρύων
δάφνης, ἐλαίας, ἀμπέλου· πυκνόπτεροι δ’
εἴσω κατ’ αὐτὸν εὐστομοῦσ’ ἀηδόνες·
οὖ κῶλα κάμψον τοῦδ’ ἐπ’ ἀξέστου πέτρου·
20 μακρὰν γὰρ ὡς γέροντι προὐστάλης ὁδόν.

ΟΙ. Κάθιζέ νύν με καὶ φύλασσε τὸν τυφλόν.

ΑΝ. Χρόνου μὲν οὕνεκ’ οὐ μαθεῖν με δεῖ τόδε.

ΟΙ. Ἔχεις διδάξαι δή μ’ ὅποι καθέσταμεν;

ΑΝ. Τὰς γοῦν Ἀθήνας οἶδα, τὸν δὲ χῶρον οὔ.
ΟΙ. Πᾶς γάρ τις ηὔδα τοῦτό γ’ ἡμὶν ἐμπόρων.

ΑΝ. Ἀλλ’ ὅστις ὁ τόπος ἦ μάθω μολοῦσά ποι;

ΟΙ. Ναί, τέκνον, εἴπερ ἐστί γ’ ἐξοικήσιμος.

ΑΝ. Ἀλλ’ ἐστὶ μὴν οἰκητός· οἶομαι δὲ δεῖν
οὐδέν· πέλας γὰρ ἄνδρα τόνδε νῷν ὁρῶ.
ΟΙ. Ἦ δεῦρο προ‹ς›στείχοντα κἀξορμώμενον;

ΑΝ. Καὶ δὴ μὲν οὖν παρόντα· χὤ τι σοι λέγειν
εὔκαιρόν ἐστιν, ἔννεφ’, ὡς ἀνὴρ ὅδε.

ΟΙ. Ὦ ξεῖν’, ἀκούων τῆσδε τῆς ὑπέρ τ’ ἐμοῦ
αὐτῆς θ’ ὁρώσης οὕνεχ’ ἡμὶν αἴσιος
σκοπὸς προσήκεις ὧν ἀδηλοῦμεν φράσαι -

ΞΕΝΟΣ
Πρίν νυν τὰ πλείον’ ἱστορεῖν, ἐκ τῆσδ’ ἕδρας

ἔξελθ’· ἔχεις γὰρ χῶρον οὐχ ἁγνὸν πατεῖν.

ΟΙ. Τίς δ’ ἔσθ’ ὁ χῶρος; τοῦ θεῶν νομίζεται;

ΞΕ. Ἄθικτος οὐδ’ οἰκητός· αἱ γὰρ ἔμφοβοι
θεαί σφ’ ἔχουσι, Γῆς τε καὶ Σκότου κόραι.

ΟΙ. Τίνων τὸ σεμνὸν ὄνομ’ ἂν εὐξαίμην κλύων;

ΞΕ. Τὰς πάνθ’ ὁρώσας Εὐμενίδας ὅ γ’ ἐνθάδ’ ἂν
εἴποι λεώς νιν· ἄλλα δ’ ἀλλαχοῦ καλά.

ΟΙ. Ἀλλ’ ἵλεῳ μὲν τὸν ἱκέτην δεξαίατο,
ὡς οὐχ ἕδρας γῆς τῆσδ’ ἂν ἐξέλθοιμ’ ἔτι.

ΞΕ. Τί δ’ ἐστὶ τοῦτο;

ΟΙ. Ξυμφορᾶς ξύνθημ’ ἐμῆς.

ΞΕ. Ἀλλ’ οὐδ’ ἐμόν τοι τοὐξανιστάναι πόλεως

δίχ’ ἐστὶ θάρσος, πρίν γ’ ἂν ἐνδείξω τί δρῶ.

ΟΙ. Πρός νυν θεῶν, ὦ ξεῖνε, μή μ’ ἀτιμάσῃς
50 τοιόνδ’ ἀλήτην ὢν σε προστρέπω φράσαι.

ΞΕ. Σήμαινε, κοὐκ ἄτιμος ἔκ γ’ ἐμοῦ φανῇ.

ΟΙ. Τίς δ’ ἔσθ’ ὁ χῶρος δῆτ’ ἐν ᾧ βεβήκαμεν;

ΞΕ. Ὅσ’ οἶδα κἀγὼ πάντ’ ἐπιστήσῃ κλύων.
Χῶρος μὲν ἱρὸς πᾶς ὅδ’ ἔστ’· ἔχει δέ νιν
55 σεμνὸς Ποσειδῶν· ἐν δ’ ὁ πυρφόρος θεὸς
Τιτὰν Προμηθεύς· ὃν δ’ ἐπιστείβεις τόπον
χθονὸς καλεῖται τῆσδε χαλκόπους ὁδός,
ἔρεισμ’ Ἀθηνῶν· οἱ δὲ πλησίοι γύαι
τόνδ’ ἱππότην Κολωνὸν εὔχονται σφίσιν
60 ἀρχηγὸν εἶναι, καὶ φέρουσι τοὔνομα
τὸ τοῦδε κοινὸν πάντες ὠνομασμένοι.
Τοιαῦτά σοι ταῦτ’ ἐστίν, ὦ ξέν’, οὐ λόγοις
τιμώμεν’, ἀλλὰ τῇ ξυνουσίᾳ πλέον.

ΟΙ. Ἦ γάρ τινες ναίουσι τούσδε τοὺς τόπους;
65 ΞΕ. Καὶ κάρτα, τοῦδε τοῦ θεοῦ γ’ ἐπώνυμοι.

ΟΙ. Ἄρχει τις αὐτῶν, ἢ ‘πὶ τῷ πλήθει λόγος;

ΞΕ. Ἐκ τοῦ κατ’ ἄστυ βασιλέως τάδ’ ἄρχεται.

ΟΙ. Οὗτος δὲ τίς λόγῳ τε καὶ σθένει κρατεῖ;

ΞΕ. Θησεὺς καλεῖται, τοῦ πρὶν Αἰγέως τόκος.
ΟΙ. Ἆρ’ ἄν τις αὐτῷ πομπὸς ἐξ ὑμῶν μόλοι;

ΞΕ. Ὡς πρὸς τί; λέξων ἢ καταρτύσων μολεῖν;

ΟΙ. Ὡς ἂν προσαρκῶν μικρὰ κερδάνῃ μέγα.

ΞΕ. Καὶ τίς πρὸς ἀνδρὸς μὴ βλέποντος ἄρκεσις;

ΟΙ. Ὅσ’ ἂν λέγωμεν πάνθ’ ὁρῶντα λέξομεν.
ΞΕ. Οἶσθ’, ὦ ξέν’, ὡς νῦν μὴ σφαλῇς; ἐπείπερ εἶ
γενναῖος, ὡς ἰδόντι, πλὴν τοῦ δαίμονος·
αὐτοῦ μέν’, οὗπερ κἀφάνης, ἕως ἐγὼ
τοῖς ἐνθάδ’ αὐτοῦ, μὴ κατ’ ἄστυ, δημόταις
λέξω τάδ’ ἐλθών· οἵδε γὰρ κρινοῦσί γε
εἰ χρή σε μίμνειν ἢ πορεύεσθαι πάλιν.

ΟΙ. Ὦ τέκνον, ἦ βέβηκεν ἡμὶν ὁ ξένος;

ΑΝ. Βέβηκεν, ὥστε πᾶν ἐν ἡσύχῳ, πάτερ,
ἔξεστι φωνεῖν, ὡς ἐμοῦ μόνης πέλας.

ΟΙ. Ὦ πότνιαι δεινῶπες, εὖτε νῦν ἕδρας
πρώτων ἐφ᾽ ὑμῶν τῆσδε γῆς ἔκαμψ᾽ ἐγώ,
Φοίβῳ τε κἀμοὶ μὴ γένησθ᾽ ἀγνώμονες,
ὅς μοι, τὰ πόλλ᾽ ἐκεῖν᾽ ὅτ᾽ ἐξέχρη κακά,
ταύτην ἔλεξε παῦλαν ἐν χρόνῳ μακρῷ
ἐλθόντι χώραν τερμίαν, ὅπου θεῶν
σεμνῶν ἕδραν λάβοιμι καὶ ξενόστασιν,
ἐνταῦθα κάμψειν τὸν ταλαίπωρον βίον,
κέρδη μὲν οἰκήσαντα τοῖς δεδεγμένοις,
ἄτην δὲ τοῖς πέμψασιν οἵ μ᾽ ἀπήλασαν.
σημεῖα δ᾽ ἥξειν τῶνδέ μοι παρηγγύα,
ἢ σεισμὸν ἢ βροντήν τιν᾽ ἢ Διὸς σέλας.
Ἔγνωκα μέν νυν ὡς με τήνδε τὴν ὁδὸν
οὐκ ἔσθ᾽ ὅπως οὐ πιστὸν ἐξ ὑμῶν πτερὸν
ἐξήγαγ᾽ εἰς τόδ᾽ ἄλσος· οὐ γὰρ ἄν ποτε
πρώταισιν ὑμῖν ἀντέκυρσ᾽ ὁδοιπορῶν,
νήφων ἀοίνοις, κἀπὶ σεμνὸν ἑζόμην
βάθρον τόδ᾽ ἀσκέπαρνον. Ἀλλά μοι, θεαί,
βίου κατ᾽ ὀμφὰς τὰς Ἀπόλλωνος δότε
πέρασιν ἤδη καὶ καταστροφήν τινα,
εἰ μὴ δοκῶ τι μειόνως ἔχειν, ἀεὶ
μόχθοις λατρεύων τοῖς ὑπερτάτοις βροτῶν.
Ἴτ᾽, ὦ γλυκεῖαι παῖδες ἀρχαίου Σκότου,
ἴτ᾽, ὦ μεγίστης Παλλάδος καλούμεναι
πασῶν Ἀθῆναι τιμιωτάτη πόλις,
οἰκτίρατ᾽ ἀνδρὸς Οἰδίπου τόδ᾽ ἄθλιον
εἴδωλον· οὐ γὰρ δὴ τόδ᾽ ἀρχαῖον δέμας.

ΑΝ. Σίγα· πορεύονται γὰρ οἵδε δή τινες
χρόνῳ παλαιοὶ σῆς ἕδρας ἐπίσκοποι.

ΟΙ. Σιγήσομαί τε καὶ σύ μ’ ἐξ ὁδοῦ πόδα
κρύψον κατ’ ἄλσος, τῶνδ’ ἕως ἂν ἐκμάθω
115 τίνας λόγους ἐροῦσιν· ἐν γὰρ τῷ μαθεῖν
ἔνεστιν ηὐλάβεια τῶν ποιουμένων.

ΧΟΡΟΣ
Ὅρα· τίς ἄρ’ ἦν; ποῦ ναίει; Str. 1 .
ποῦ κυρεῖ ἐκτόπιος συθείς,
120 ὁ πάντων, ὁ πάντων ἀκορέστατος;
προσδέρκου, λευστέον,
προσπεύθου πανταχῇ.
Πλανάτας, πλανάτας τις ὁ πρέσβυς, οὐδ’
125 ἔγχωρος· προσέβα γὰρ οὐκ
ἄν ποτ’ ἀστιβὲς ἄλσος ἐς
τᾶνδ’ ἀμαιμακετᾶν κορᾶν,
ἃς τρέμομεν λέγειν,
130 καὶ παραμειβόμεσθ’
ἀδέρκτως, ἀφώνως, ἀλόγως τὸ τᾶς
εὐφάμου στόμα φροντίδος
ἰέντες· τὰ δὲ νῦν τιν’ ἥ-
κειν λόγος οὐδὲν ἄζονθ’,
135 ὃν ἐγὼ λεύσσων περὶ πᾶν οὔπω
δύναμαι τέμενος
γνῶναι ποῦ μοί ποτε ναίει.

ΟΙ. Ὅδ’ ἐκεῖνος ἐγώ· φωνῇ γὰρ ὁρῶ,
τὸ φατιζόμενον.
140 ΧΟ. Ἰὼ ἰώ,

δεινὸς μὲν ὁρᾶν, δεινὸς δὲ κλύειν.

ΟΙ. Μή μ’, ἱκετεύω, προσίδητ’ ἄνομον.

ΧΟ. Ζεῦ Ἀλεξῆτορ, τίς ποθ’ ὁ πρέσβυς;

ΟΙ. Οὐ πάνυ μοίρας εὐδαιμονίσαι
145 πρώτης, ὦ τῆσδ’ ἔφοροι χώρας.
Δηλῶ δ’· οὐ γὰρ ἂν ὧδ’ ἀλλοτρίοις
ὄμμασιν εἶρπον,
κἀπὶ σμικροῖς μέγας ὥρμουν.

ΧΟ. Ἐή, ἀλαῶν ὀμμάτων Ant. 1 .
150 ἆρα καὶ ἦσθα φυτάλμιος;
δυσαίων μακραίων θ’, ὅσ’ ἐπεικάσαι.
Ἀλλ’ οὐ μὰν ἔν γ’ ἐμοὶ
προσθήσεις τάσδ’ ἀράς.
155 Περᾷς γάρ, περᾷς· ἀλλ’ ἵνα τῷδ’ ἐν ἀ-
φθέγκτῳ μὴ προπέσῃς νάπει
ποιάεντι, κάθυδρος οὐ
κρατὴρ μειλιχίων ποτῶν
160 ῥεύματι συντρέχει·
τῶν, ξένε πάμμορ’, εὖ
φύλαξαι· μετάσταθ’, ἀπόβαθι. Πολ-
λὰ κέλευθος ἐρατύει·
165 κλύεις, ὦ πολύμοχθ’ ἀλᾶ-
τα; λόγον εἴ τιν’ οἴσεις
πρὸς ἐμὰν λέσχαν, ἀβάτων ἀποβάς,
ἵνα πᾶσι νόμος

φώνει· πρόσθεν δ’ ἀπερύκου.
ΟΙ. Θύγατερ, ποῖ τις φροντίδος ἔλθῃ;

ΑΝ. Ὦ πάτερ, ἀστοῖς ἴσα χρὴ μελετᾶν
εἴκοντας ἃ δεῖ κἀκούοντας.

ΟΙ. Πρόσθιγέ νύν μου.

ΑΝ. Ψαύω καὶ δή.

ΟΙ. Ὦ ξεῖνοι, μὴ δῆτ’ ἀδικηθῶ
σοὶ πιστεύσας καὶ μεταναστάς.

ΧΟ. Οὔ τοι μήποτέ σ’ ἐκ τῶνδ’ ἑδράνων,
ὦ γέρον, ἄκοντά τις ἄξει.

ΟΙ. Ἔτ’ οὖν; [ἔτι προβῶ;] Str. 2 .

ΧΟ. Ἔτι βαῖνε πόρσω.
ΟΙ. Ἔτι;

ΧΟ. Προβίβαζε, κούρα,
πόρσω· σὺ γὰρ ἀΐεις.

ΑΝ. Ἔπεο μάν, ἔπε’ ὦδ’ ἀμαυρῷ -

ΟΙ. ‹Ἰώ μοί μοι›.

ΑΝ. κώλῳ, πάτερ, ᾗ σ’ ἄγω.
⏑⏑ – ⏑⏑ – ⏑ –
– – ⏑⏑ – ⏑ –

ΟΙ. – – ⏑⏑ –

ΧΟ. Τόλμα ξεῖνος ἐπὶ ξένης,
185 ὦ τλάμων, ὅ τι καὶ πόλις
τέτροφεν ἄφιλον ἀποστυγεῖν
καὶ τὸ φίλον σέβεσθαι.

ΟΙ. Ἄγε νυν σύ με, παῖ,
ἵν’ ἂν εὐσεβίας ἐπιβαίνοντες
190 τὸ μὲν εἴποιμεν, τὸ δ’ ἀκούσαιμεν,
καὶ μὴ χρείᾳ πολεμῶμεν.

ΧΟ. Αὐτοῦ· μηκέτι τοῦδ’ ἀντιπέτρου
βήματος ἔξω πόδα κλίνῃς.

ΟΙ. Οὕτως; Ant. 2 .

ΧΟ. Ἅλις, ὡς ἀκούεις.
195 ΟΙ. Ἦ ‘σθῶ;

ΧΟ. Λέχριός γ’ ἐπ’ ἄκρου
λάου βραχὺς ὀκλάσας.

ΑΝ. Πάτερ, ἐμὸν τόδ’· ἐν ἀσυχαίᾳ -

ΟΙ. Ἰώ μοί μοι.

ΑΝ. βάσει βάσιν ἄρμοσαι,
200 γεραὸν ἐς χέρα σῶμα σὸν
προκλίνας φιλίαν ἐμάν.

ΟΙ. Ὤμοι δύσφρονος ἅτας.

ΧΟ. Ἦ τλάμων, ὅτε νῦν χαλᾷς,
αὔδασον, τίς ἔφυς βροτῶν;
τίς ὁ πολύπονος ἄγῃ; τίν’ ἂν
σοῦ πατρίδ’ ἐκπυθοίμαν;

ΟΙ. Ἦ ξένοι, ἀπόπτολις· ἀλλὰ μὴ - Epode.

ΧΟ. Τί τόδ’ ἀπεννέπεις, γέρον;
ΟΙ. μή, μή μ’ ἀνέρῃ τίς εἰμι,
μηδ’ ἐξετάσῃς πέρα ματεύων.

ΧΟ. Τί τόδ’;

ΟΙ. Αἰνὰ φύσις.

ΧΟ. Αὔδα.

ΟΙ. Τέκνον, ὤμοι, τί γεγώνω;

ΧΟ. Τίνος εἶ σπέρματος, ‹ὦ›
ξένε, φώνει, πατρόθεν;

ΟΙ. Ὤμοι ἐγώ, τί πάθω, τέκνον ἐμόν;

ΑΝ. Λέγ’, ἐπείπερ ἐπ’ ἔσχατα βαίνεις.

ΟΙ. Ἀλλ’ ἐρῶ· οὐ γὰρ ἔχω κατακρυφάν.

ΧΟ. Μακρὰ μέλλετον, ἀλλὰ τάχυνε.
220 ΟΙ. Λαΐου ἴστε τιν’ ἔκγονον;

ΧΟ. Ἰού.

ΟΙ. Τό τε Λαβδακιδᾶν γένος;

ΧΟ. Ἴ Ζεῦ.

ΟΙ. Ἄθλιον Οἰδιπόδαν;

ΧΟ. Σὺ γὰρ ὅδ’ εἶ;

ΟΙ. Δέος ἴσχετε μηδὲν ὅσ’ αὐδῶ.

ΧΟ. Ἰώ, ὢ ὤ.

ΟΙ. Δύσμορος.

ΧΟ. Ὢ ὤ.

ΟΙ. Θύγατερ, τί ποτ’ αὐτίκα κύρσει;

ΧΟ. Ἔξω πόρσω βαίνετε χώρας.

ΟΙ. Ἃ δ’ ὑπέσχεο ποῖ καταθήσεις;

ΧΟ. Οὐδενὶ μοιριδία τίσις ἔρχεται
ὧν προπάθῃ τὸ τίνειν· ἀπάτα δ’ ἀπά-
ταις ἑτέραις ἑτέρα παραβαλλομέ-
να πόνον, οὐ χάριν, ἀντιδίδωσιν ἔ-
χειν. Σὺ δὲ τῶνδ’ ἐδράνων πάλιν ἔκτοπος
αὖθις ἄφορμος ἐμᾶς χθονὸς ἔκθορε,
μή τι πέρα χρέος

ἐμᾷ πόλει προσάψῃς.

ΑΝ. Ὦ ξένοι αἰδόφρονες,
ἀλλ’ ἐπεὶ γεραὸν πατέρα
τόνδ’ ἐμὸν οὐκ ἀνέτλατ’, ἔργων
ἀκόντων ἀΐοντες αὐδάν,
ἀλλ’ ἐμὲ τὰν μελέαν, ἱκετεύομεν,
ὦ ξένοι, οἰκτίραθ’, ἃ
πατρὸς ὑπὲρ τού‹του› μόνου ἄντομαι,
ἄντομαι οὐκ ἀλαοῖς προσορωμένα
ὄμμα σὸν ὄμμασιν, ὥς τις ἀφ’ αἵματος
ὑμετέρου προφανεῖσα, τὸν ἄθλιον
αἰδοῦς κῦρσαι· ἐν ὔμμι γὰρ ὡς θεῷ
κείμεθα τλάμονες· ἀλλ’ ἴτε, νεύσατε
τὰν ἀδόκητον χάριν.
Πρός σ’ ὅ τι σοι φίλον ἐκ σέθεν ἄντομαι,
ἢ τέκνον ἢ λέχος ἢ χρέος ἢ θεός·
οὐ γὰρ ἴδοις ἂν ἀθρῶν βροτὸν ὅστις ἄν,
εἰ θεὸς ἄγοι,
ἐκφυγεῖν δύναιτο.

ΧΟ. Ἀλλ’ ἴσθι, τέκνον Οἰδίπου, σέ τ’ ἐξ ἴσου
οἰκτίρομεν καὶ τόνδε συμφορᾶς χάριν·
τὰ δ’ ἐκ θεῶν τρέμοντες οὐ σθένοιμεν ἂν
φωνεῖν πέρα τῶν πρὸς σὲ νῦν εἰρημένων.

ΟΙ. Τί δῆτα δόξης, ἢ τί κληδόνος καλῆς
μάτην ῥεούσης ὠφέλημα γίγνεται,
εἰ τάς γ’ Ἀθήνας φασὶ θεοσεβεστάτας
εἶναι, μόνας δὲ τὸν κακούμενον ξένον
σῴζειν οἵας τε καὶ μόνας ἀρκεῖν ἔχειν,
κἀμοίγε ποῦ ταῦτ’ ἐστίν, οἵτινες βάθρων

ἐκ τῶνδέ μ’ ἐξάραντες εἶτ’ ἐλαύνετε,
ὄνομα μόνον δείσαντες; οὐ γὰρ δὴ τό γε
σῶμ’ οὐδὲ τἄργα τἄμ’, ἐπεὶ τά γ’ ἔργα μου
πεπονθότ’ ἐστὶ μᾶλλον ἢ δεδρακότα,
εἴ σοι τὰ μητρὸς καὶ πατρὸς χρείη λέγειν,
ὧν οὕνεκ’ ἐκφοβῇ με, τοῦτ’ ἐγὼ καλῶς
ἔξοιδα· καίτοι πῶς ἐγὼ κακὸς φύσιν,
ὅστις παθὼν μὲν ἀντέδρων, ὥστ’ εἰ φρονῶν
ἔπρασσον, οὐδ’ ἂν ὧδ’ ἐγιγνόμην κακός;
Νῦν δ’ οὐδὲν εἰδὼς ἱκόμην ἵν’ ἱκόμην,
ὑφ’ ὧν δ’ ἔπασχον εἰδότων ἀπωλλύμην.
Ἀνθ’ ὧν ἱκνοῦμαι πρὸς θεῶν ὑμᾶς, ξένοι,
ὥσπερ με κἀνεστήσαθ’, ὧδε σώσατε,
καὶ μὴ θεοὺς τιμῶντες εἶτα τοὺς θεοὺς
μοίραις ποιεῖσθ’ ἐν μηδαμαῖς, ἡγεῖσθε δὲ
βλέπειν μὲν αὐτοὺς πρὸς τὸν εὐσεβῆ βροτῶν,
βλέπειν δὲ πρὸς τοὺς δυσσεβεῖς, φυγὴν δέ που
μήπω γενέσθαι φωτὸς ἀνοσίου θεῶν.
Ξὺν οἷς σὺ μὴ κάλυπτε τὰς εὐδαίμονας
ἔργοις Ἀθήνας ἀνοσίοις ὑπηρετῶν,
ἀλλ’ ὥσπερ ἔλαβες τὸν ἱκέτην ἐχέγγυον,
ῥύου με κἀκφύλασσε· μηδέ μου κάρα
τὸ δυσπρόσοπτον εἰσορῶν ἀτιμάσῃς.
Ἥκω γὰρ ἱερὸς εὐσεβής τε καὶ φέρων
ὄνησιν ἀστοῖς τοῖσδ’· ὅταν δ’ ὁ κύριος
παρῇ τις, ὑμῶν ὅστις ἐστὶν ἡγεμών,
τότ’ εἰσακούων πάντ’ ἐπιστήσῃ· τὰ δὲ
μεταξὺ τούτου μηδαμῶς γίγνου κακός.

ΧΟ. Ταρβεῖν μέν, ὦ γεραιέ, τἀνθυμήματα
πολλή ‘στ’ ἀνάγκη τἀπὸ σοῦ· λόγοισι γὰρ
οὐκ ὠνόμασται βραχέσι· τοὺς δὲ τῆσδε γῆς
ἄνακτας ἀρκεῖ ταῦτά μοι διειδέναι.

ΟΙ. Καὶ ποῦ ‘σθ’ ὁ κραίνων τῆσδε τῆς χώρας, ξένοι;

ΧΟ. Πατρῷον ἄστυ γῆς ἔχει· σκοπὸς δέ νιν,
ὃς κἀμὲ δεῦρ’ ἔπεμψεν, οἴχεται στελῶν.

ΟΙ. Ἦ καὶ δοκεῖτε τοῦ τυφλοῦ τιν’ ἐντροπὴν
ἢ φροντίδ’ ἕξειν, αὐτὸν ὥστ’ ἐλθεῖν πέλας;

ΧΟ. Καὶ κάρθ’, ὅταν περ τοὔνομ’ αἴσθηται τὸ σόν.

ΟΙ. Τίς δ’ ἔσθ’ ὁ κείνῳ τοῦτο τοὔπος ἀγγελῶν;

ΧΟ. Μακρὰ κέλευθος· πολλὰ δ’ ἐμπόρων ἔπη
φιλεῖ πλανᾶσθαι, τῶν ἐκεῖνος ἀΐων,
θάρσει, παρέσται· πολὺ γάρ, ὦ γέρον, τὸ σὸν
ὄνομα διήκει πάντας, ὥστε κεἰ βραδὺς
εὕδει, κλύων σοῦ δεῦρ’ ἀφίξεται ταχύς.

ΟΙ. Ἀλλ’ εὐτυχὴς ἵκοιτο τῇ θ’ αὐτοῦ πόλει
ἐμοί τε· τίς γὰρ ἐσθλὸς οὐχ αὑτῷ φίλος;
ΑΝ. Ὦ Ζεῦ, τί λέξω; ποῖ φρενῶν ἔλθω, πάτερ;

ΟΙ. Τί δ’ ἔστι, τέκνον Ἀντιγόνη;

ΑΝ. Γυναῖχ’ ὁρῶ
στείχουσαν ἡμῶν ἄσσον, Αἰτναίας ἐπὶ
πώλου βεβῶσαν· κρατὶ δ’ ἡλιοστερὴς
κυνῆ πρόσωπα Θεσσαλίς νιν ἀμπέχει.
315 Τί φῶ;
ἆρ’ ἔστιν; ἆρ’ οὐκ ἔστιν; ἡ γνώμη πλανᾷ,
καὶ φημὶ κἀπόφημι, κοὐκ ἔχω τί φῶ.
Τάλαινα,
οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλη· φαιδρὰ γοῦν ἀπ’ ὀμμάτων
320 σαίνει με προσστείχουσα, σημαίνει δέ τι·
μόνης τόδ’ ἐστί, δῆλον, Ἰσμήνης κάρα.

ΟΙ. Πῶς εἶπας, ὦ παῖ;

ΑΝ. Παῖδα σήν, ἐμὴν δ’ ὁρᾶν
ὅμαιμον· αὐδῇ δ’ αὐτίκ’ ἔξεστιν μαθεῖν.

ΙΣΜΗΝΗ
Ὦ δισσὰ πατρὸς καὶ κασιγνήτης ἐμοὶ
325 ἥδιστα προσφωνήμαθ’, ὡς ὑμᾶς μόλις
εὑροῦσα λύπῃ δεύτερον μόλις βλέπω.

ΟΙ. Ὦ τέκνον, ἥκεις;

ΙΣ. Ὦ πάτερ δύσμοιρ’ ὁρᾶν.

ΟΙ. Τέκνον, πέφηνας;

ΙΣ. Οὐκ ἄνευ μόχθου γέ μοι.

330 ΟΙ. Πρόσψαυσον, ὦ παῖ.

ΙΣ. Θιγγάνω δυοῖν ὁμοῦ.

ΟΙ. Ὦ σπέρμ’ ὅμαιμον.

ΙΣ. Ὦ δυσάθλιαι τροφαί.

ΟΙ. Ἦ τῆσδε κἀμοῦ;

ΙΣ. Δυσμόρου δ’ ἐμοῦ τρίτης.

ΟΙ. Τέκνον, τί δ’ ἦλθες;

ΙΣ. Σῇ, πάτερ, προμηθίᾳ.

ΟΙ. Πότερα πόθοισι;

ΙΣ. Καὶ λόγων γ’ αὐτάγγελος
ξὺν ᾧπερ εἶχον οἰκετῶν πιστῷ μόνῳ.
335 ΟΙ. Οἱ δ’ αὐθόμαιμοι ποῖ νεανίαι πονεῖν;

ΙΣ. Εἴσ’ οὔπέρ εἰσι· δεινὰ δ’ ἐν κείνοις τὰ νῦν.

ΟΙ. Ὦ πάντ’ ἐκείνω τοῖς ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ νόμοις
φύσιν κατεικασθέντε καὶ βίου τροφάς·
ἐκεῖ γὰρ οἱ μὲν ἄρσενες κατὰ στέγας
340 θακοῦσιν ἱστουργοῦντες, αἱ δὲ σύννομοι
τἄξω βίου τροφεῖα πορσύνουσ’ ἀεί.
Σφῷν δ’, ὦ τέκν’, οὓς μὲν εἰκὸς ἦν πονεῖν τάδε,
κατ’ οἶκον οἰκουροῦσιν ὥστε παρθένοι,
σφὼ δ’ ἀντ’ ἐκείνων τἀμὰ δυστήνου κακὰ
345 ὑπερπονεῖτον, ἡ μέν, ἐξ ὅτου νέας
τροφῆς ἔληξε καὶ κατίσχυσεν δέμας,
ἀεὶ μεθ’ ἡμῶν δύσμορος πλανωμένη
γερονταγωγεῖ, πολλὰ μὲν κατ’ ἀγρίαν
ὕλην ἄσιτος νηλίπους τ’ ἀλωμένη,
350 πολλοῖσι δ’ ὄμβροις ἡλίου τε καύμασι
μοχθοῦσα τλήμων δεύτερ’ ἡγεῖται τὰ τῆς
οἴκοι διαίτης, εἰ πατὴρ τροφὴν ἔχοι·
σὺ δ’, ὦ τέκνον, πρόσθεν μὲν ἐξίκου πατρὶ
μαντεῖ’ ἄγουσα πάντα, Καδμείων λάθρᾳ.

ἃ τοῦδ’ ἐχρήσθη σώματος, φύλαξ δέ μου
πιστὴ κατέστης, γῆς ὅτ’ ἐξηλαυνόμην.
Νῦν δ’ αὖ τίν’ ἥκεις μῦθον, Ἰσμήνη, πατρὶ
φέρουσα; τίς σ’ ἐξῆρεν οἴκοθεν στόλος;
ἥκεις γὰρ οὐ κενή γε, τοῦτ’ ἐγὼ σαφῶς
ἔξοιδα, μὴ οὐχὶ δεῖμ’ ἐμοὶ φέρουσά τι.

ΙΣ. Ἐγὼ τὰ μὲν παθήμαθ’ ἅπαθον, πάτερ,
ζητοῦσα τὴν σὴν ποῦ κατοικοίης τροφήν,
παρεῖσ’ ἐάσω· δὶς γὰρ οὐχὶ βούλομαι
πονοῦσά τ’ ἀλγεῖν καὶ λέγουσ’ αὖθις πάλιν.
Ἃ δ’ ἀμφὶ τοῖν σοῖν δυσμόροιν παίδοιν κακὰ
νῦν ἐστι, ταῦτα σημανοῦσ’ ἐλήλυθα.
Πρὶν μὲν γὰρ αὐτοῖς ἦν ἔρις Κρέοντί τε
θρόνους ἐᾶσθαι μηδὲ χραίνεσθαι πόλιν,
λόγῳ σκοποῦσι τὴν πάλαι γένους φθορὰν
οἵα κατέσχε τὸν σὸν ἄθλιον δόμον·
νῦν δ’ ἐκ θεῶν του κἀξ ἀλιτηροῦ φρενὸς
εἰσῆλθε τοῖν τρὶς ἀθλίοιν ἔρις κακὴ
ἀρχῆς λαβέσθαι καὶ κράτους τυραννικοῦ.
Χὠ μὲν νεάζων καὶ χρόνῳ μείων γεγὼς
τὸν πρόσθε γεννηθέντα Πολυνείκη θρόνων
ἀποστερίσκει κἀξελήλακεν πάτρας.
Ὅ δ’, ὡς καθ’ ἡμᾶς ἔσθ’ ὁ πληθύων λόγος,
τὸ κοῖλον Ἄργος βὰς φυγάς, προσλαμβάνει
κῆδός τε καινὸν καὶ ξυνασπιστὰς φίλους,
ὡς αὐτίκ’ Ἄργος ἢ τὸ Καδμείων πέδον
πάλῃ καθέξον ἢ πρὸς οὐρανὸν βιβῶν.
Ταῦτ’ οὐκ ἀριθμός ἐστιν, ὦ πάτερ, λόγων,
ἀλλ’ ἔργα δεινά· τοὺς δὲ σοὺς ὅποι θεοὶ
πόνους κατοικτιοῦσιν οὐκ ἔχω μαθεῖν.
ΟΙ. Ἤδη γὰρ ἔσχες ἐλπίδ’ ὡς ἐμοῦ θεοὺς
ὤραν τιν’ ἔξειν, ὥστε σωθῆναί ποτε;

ΙΣ. Ἔγωγε τοῖς νῦν γ’, ὦ πάτερ, μαντεύμασιν.

ΟΙ. Ποίοισι τούτοις; τί δὲ τεθέσπισται, τέκνον;

ΙΣ. Σὲ τοῖς ἐκεῖ ζητητὸν ἀνθρώποις ποτὲ
390 θανόντ’ ἔσεσθαι ζῶντά τ’ εὐσοίας χάριν.

ΟΙ. Τίς δ’ ἂν τοιοῦδ’ ὑπ’ ἀνδρὸς εὖ πράξειεν ἄν;

ΙΣ. Ἐν σοὶ τὰ κείνων φασὶ γίγνεσθαι κράτη.

ΟΙ. Ὅτ’ οὐκέτ’ εἰμί, τηνικαῦτ’ ἄρ’ εἴμ’ ἀνήρ;

ΙΣ. Νῦν γὰρ θεοί σ’ ὀρθοῦσι, πρόσθε δ’ ὤλλυσαν.
395 ΟΙ. Γέροντα δ’ ὀρθοῦν φλαῦρον ὃς νέος πέσῃ.

ΙΣ. Καὶ μὴν Κρέοντά γ’ ἴσθι σοι τούτων χάριν
ἥξοντα βαιοῦ κοὐχὶ μυρίου χρόνου.

ΟΙ. Ὅπως τί δράσῃ, θύγατερ; ἑρμήνευέ μοι.

ΙΣ. Ὡς σ’ ἄγχι γῆς στήσωσι Καδμείας, ὅπως
400 κρατῶσι μὲν σοῦ, γῆς δὲ μὴ ‘μβαίνῃς ὅρων.

ΟΙ. Ἡ δ’ ὠφέλησις τίς θύρασι κειμένου;

ΙΣ. Κείνοις ὁ τύμβος δυστυχῶν ὁ σὸς βαρύς.

ΟΙ. Κἄνευ θεοῦ τις τοῦτό γ’ ἂν γνώμῃ μάθοι.

ΙΣ. Τούτου χάριν τοίνυν σε προσθέσθαι πέλας
405 χώρας θέλουσι, μηδ’ ἵν’ ἂν σαυτοῦ κρατοῖς.

ΟΙ. Ἦ καὶ κατασκιῶσι Θηβαίᾳ κόνει;

ΙΣ. Ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἐᾷ τοὔμφυλον αἷμά σ’, ὦ πάτερ.

ΟΙ. Οὐκ ἆρ’ ἐμοῦ γε μὴ κρατήσωσίν ποτε.

ΙΣ. Ἔσται ποτ’ ἆρα τοῦτο Καδμείοις βάρος.
ΟΙ. Ποίας φανείσης, ὦ τέκνον, συναλλαγῆς;

ΙΣ. Τῆς σῆς ὑπ’ ὀργῆς, σοῖς ὅταν στῶσιν τάφοις.

ΟΙ. Ἃ δ’ ἐννέπεις κλύουσα τοῦ λέγεις, τέκνον;

ΙΣ. Ἀνδρῶν θεωρῶν Δελφικῆς ἀφ’ ἑστίας.

ΟΙ. Καὶ ταῦτ’ ἐφ’ ἡμῖν Φοῖβος εἰρηκὼς κυρεῖ;
ΙΣ. Ὡς φασὶν οἱ μολόντες εἰς Θήβης πέδον.

ΟΙ. Παίδων τις οὖν ἦκουσε τῶν ἐμῶν τάδε;

ΙΣ. Ἄμφω γ’ ὁμοίως, κἀξεπίστασθον καλῶς.

ΟΙ. Κᾆθ’ οἱ κάκιστοι τῶνδ’ ἀκούσαντες πάρος
τοὐμοῦ πόθου προὔθεντο τὴν τυραννίδα;
ΙΣ. Ἀλγῶ κλύουσα ταῦτ’ ἐγώ, φέρω δ’ ὅμως.

ΟΙ. Ἀλλ’ οἱ θεοί σφιν μήτε τὴν πεπρωμένην
ἔριν κατασβέσειαν, ἐν δ’ ἐμοὶ τέλος
αὐτοῖν γένοιτο τῆσδε τῆς μάχης πέρι,
ἧς νῦν ἔχονται κἀπαναίρονται δόρυ·
ὡς οὔτ’ ἂν ὃς νῦν σκῆπτρα καὶ θρόνους ἔχει
μείνειεν, οὔτ’ ἂν οὐξεληλυθὼς πάλιν
ἔλθοι ποτ’ αὖθις· οἵ γε τὸν φύσαντ’ ἐμὲ
οὕτως ἀτίμως πατρίδος ἐξωθούμενον
οὐκ ἔσχον οὐδ’ ἤμυναν, ἀλλ’ ἀνάστατος
αὐτοῖν ἐπέμφθην κἀξεκηρύχθην φυγάς.
Εἴποις ἂν ὡς θέλοντι τοῦτ’ ἐμοὶ τότε
πόλις τὸ δῶρον εἰκότως κατῄνεσεν.
Οὐ δῆτ’, ἐπεί τοι τὴν μὲν αὐτίχ’ ἡμέραν,
ὁπηνίκ’ ἔζει θυμὸς, ἥδιστον δέ μοι
τὸ κατθανεῖν ἦν καὶ τὸ λευσθῆναι πέτροις,
οὐδεὶς ἐρῶντος τοῦδ’ ἐφαίνετ’ ὠφελῶν·
χρόνῳ δ’, ὅτ’ ἤδη πᾶς ὁ μόχθος ἦν πέπων,
κἀμάνθανον τὸν θυμὸν ἐκδραμόντα μοι
μείζω κολαστὴν τῶν πρὶν ἡμαρτημένων,
τὸ τηνίκ’ ἤδη τοῦτο μὲν πόλις βίᾳ
ἤλαυνέ μ’ ἐκ γῆς χρόνιον, οἱ δ’ ἐπωφελεῖν,
οἱ τοῦ πατρὸς τῷ πατρὶ δυνάμενοι τὸ δρᾶν
οὐκ ἠθέλησαν, ἀλλ’ ἔπους μικροῦ χάριν
φυγάς σφιν ἔξω πτωχὸς ἠλώμην ἀεί.
Ἐκ ταῖνδε δ’ οὔσαιν παρθένοιν, ὅσον φύσις
δίδωσιν αὐταῖν, καὶ τροφὰς ἔχω βίου
καὶ γῆς ἄδειαν καὶ γένους ἐπάρκεσιν·
τὼ δ’ ἀντὶ τοῦ φύσαντος εἱλέσθην θρόνους
καὶ σκῆπτρα κραίνειν καὶ τυραννεύειν χθονός.
Ἀλλ’ οὔ τι μὴ λάχωσι τοῦδε συμμάχου,
οὔτε σφιν ἀρχῆς τῆσδε Καδμείας ποτὲ
ὄνησις ἥξει· τοῦτ’ ἐγῲδα, τῆσδέ τε
μαντεῖ’ ἀκούων, συννοῶν τε τἀξ ἐμοῦ
παλαίφαθ’ ἅ μοι Φοῖβος ἤνυσέν ποτε.
Πρὸς ταῦτα καὶ Κρέοντα πεμπόντων ἐμοῦ
μαστῆρα, κεἴ τις ἄλλος ἐν πόλει σθένει·
ἐὰν γὰρ ὑμεῖς, ὦ ξένοι, θέλητέ μου
σὺν ταῖσδε ταῖς σεμναῖσι δημούχοις θεαῖς

ἀλκὴν ποεῖσθαι, τῇδε μὲν πόλει μέγαν
σωτῆρ’ ἀρεῖσθε, τοῖς δ’ ἐμοῖς ἐχθροῖς πόνους.

ΧΟ. Ἐπάξιος μέν, Οἰδίπους, κατοικτίσαι,
αὐτός τε παῖδές θ’ αἵδ’· ἐπεὶ δὲ τῆσδε γῆς
σωτῆρα σαυτὸν τῷδ’ ἐπεμβάλλεις λόγῳ,
παραινέσαι σοι βούλομαι τὰ σύμφορα.

ΟΙ. Ὦ φίλταθ’, ὡς νῦν πᾶν τελοῦντι προξένει.

ΧΟ. Θοῦ νῦν καθαρμὸν τῶνδε δαιμόνων, ἐφ’ ἃς
τὸ πρῶτον ἵκου καὶ κατέστειψας πέδον.

ΟΙ. Τρόποισι ποίοις; ὦ ξένοι, διδάσκετε.

ΧΟ. Πρῶτον μὲν ἱρὰς ἐξ ἀειρύτου χοὰς
κρήνης ἐνεγκοῦ δι’ ὁσίων χειρῶν θιγών.

ΟΙ. Ὅταν δὲ τοῦτο χεῦμ’ ἀκήρατον λάβω;

ΧΟ. Κρατῆρές εἰσιν, ἀνδρὸς εὔχειρος τέχνη,
ὧν κρᾶτ’ ἔρεψον καὶ λαβὰς ἀμφιστόμους.

ΟΙ. Θαλλοῖσιν, ἢ κρόκαισιν, ἢ ποίῳ τρόπῳ;

ΧΟ. Οἰός ‹γε› νεαρᾶς νεοπόκῳ μαλλῷ λαβών.

ΟΙ. Εἶεν· τὸ δ’ ἔνθεν ποῖ τελευτῆσαί με χρή;

ΧΟ. Χοὰς χέασθαι στάντα πρὸς πρώτην ἕω.

ΟΙ. Ἦ τοῖσδε κρωσσοῖς οἷς λέγεις χέω τάδε;

ΧΟ. Τρισσάς γε πηγάς· τὸν τελευταῖον δ’ ὅλον.

ΟΙ. Τοῦ τόνδε πλήσας θῶ; δίδασκε καὶ τόδε.

ΧΟ. Ὕδατος, μελίσσης· μηδὲ προσφέρειν μέθυ.

ΟΙ. Ὅταν δὲ τούτων γῆ μελάμφυλλος τύχῃ;

ΧΟ. Τρὶς ἐννέ’ αὐτῇ κλῶνας ἐξ ἀμφοῖν χεροῖν
τιθεὶς ἐλαίας, τάσδ’ ἐπεύχεσθαι λιτάς -

ΟΙ. Τούτων ἀκοῦσαι βούλομαι· μέγιστα γάρ.

ΧΟ. Ὡς σφας καλοῦμεν Εὐμενίδας, ἐξ εὐμενῶν

στέρνων δέχεσθαι τὸν ἱκέτην σωτήριον
αἰτοῦ σύ τ’ αὐτὸς κεἴ τις ἄλλος ἀντὶ σοῦ,
ἄπυστα φωνῶν μηδὲ μηκύνων βοήν·
490 ἔπειτ’ ἀφέρπειν ἄστροφος. Καὶ ταῦτά σοι
δράσαντι θαρσῶν ἂν παρασταίην ἐγώ,
ἄλλως δὲ δειναίνοιμ’ ἄν, ὦ ξέν’, ἀμφὶ σοί.

ΟΙ. Ὦ παῖδε, κλύετον τῶνδε προσχώρων ξένων;

ΙΣ. Ἠκούσαμέν τε χὤ τι δεῖ πρόστασσε δρᾶν.
495 ΟΙ. Ἐμοὶ μὲν οὐχ ὁδωτά· λείπομαι γὰρ ἐν
τῷ μὴ δύνασθαι μήθ’ ὁρᾶν, δυοῖν κακοῖν·
σφῷν δ’ ἀτέρα μολοῦσα πραξάτω τάδε.
Ἀρκεῖν γὰρ οἶμαι κἀντὶ μυρίων μίαν
ψυχὴν τάδ’ ἐκτίνουσαν, ἢν εὔνους παρῇ.
500 Ἀλλ’ ἐν τάχει τι πράσσετον· μόνον δέ με
μὴ λείπετ’· οὐ γὰρ ἂν σθένοι τοὐμὸν δέμας
ἔρημον ἕρπειν οὐδ’ ὑφηγητοῦ δίχα.

ΙΣ. Ἀλλ’ εἶμ’ ἐγὼ τελοῦσα· τὸν τόπον δ’ ἵνα
χρῄσταί μ’ ἐφευρεῖν, τοῦτο βούλομαι μαθεῖν.
505 ΧΟ. Τοὐκεῖθεν ἄλσους, ὦ ξένη, τοῦδ’. Ἦν δέ του
σπάνιν τιν’ ἴσχῃς, ἔστ’ ἔποικος ὃς φράσει.

ΙΣ. Χωροῖμ’ ἂν ἐς τόδ’· Ἀντιγόνη, σὺ δ’ ἐνθάδε
φύλασσε πατέρα τόνδε· τοῖς τεκοῦσι γὰρ
οὐδ’ εἰ πονεῖ τις, δεῖ πόνου μνήμην ἔχειν.
510 ΧΟ. Δεινὸν μὲν τὸ πάλαι κείμενον ἤδη Str. 1 .
κακόν, ὦ ξεῖν’, ἐπεγείρειν·

ὅμως δ’ ἔραμαί ‹τι› πυθέσθαι -

ΟΙ. Τί τοῦτο;

ΧΟ. τᾶς δειλαίας ἀπόρου φανείσας
ἀλγηδόνος, ᾇ ξυνέστας.
ΟΙ. Μὴ πρὸς ξενίας ἀνοίξῃς
τᾶς σᾶς· γέγον’ ἔργ’ ἀναιδῆ.

ΧΟ. Τό τοι πολὺ καὶ μηδαμὰ λῆγον
χρῄζω, ξεῖν’, ὀρθὸν ἄκουσμ’ ἀκοῦσαι.

ΟΙ. Ὤμοι.

ΧΟ. Στέρξον, ἱκετεύω.
ΟΙ. Φεῦ φεῦ.

ΧΟ. Πείθου· κἀγὼ γὰρ ὅσον σὺ προσχρῄζεις.

ΟΙ. Ἤνεγκον κακότατ’, ὦ ξένοι, ἤνεγκ’ Ant. 1 .
ἀέκων μέν, θεὸς ἴστω·
τούτων δ’ αὐθαίρετον οὐδέν.

ΧΟ. Ἀλλ’ ἐς τί;
ΟΙ. Κακᾷ μ’ εὐνᾷ πόλις οὐδὲν ἴδρις
γάμων ἐνέδησεν ἅτᾳ.

ΧΟ. Ἦ ματρόθεν, ὡς ἀκούω,
δυσώνυμα λέκτρ’ ἐπλήσω;

ΟΙ. Ὤμοι, θάνατος μὲν τάδ’ ἀκούειν,
ὦ ξεῖν’· αὗται δὲ δύ’ ἐξ ἐμοῦ ‹μὲν› -

ΧΟ. Πῶς φῄς;

ΟΙ. παῖδε, δύο δ’ ἅτα -

ΧΟ. Ὦ Ζεῦ.

ΟΙ. ματρὸς κοινᾶς ἀπέβλαστον ὠδῖνος.

ΧΟ. Σαί τἄρ’ ἀπόγονοί τ’ εἰσὶ καὶ - Str. 2 .
ΟΙ. Κοιναί γε πατρὸς ἀδελφεαί.

ΧΟ. Ἰώ.

ΟΙ. Ἰὼ δῆτα μυρίων γ’ ἐπιστροφαὶ κακῶν.

ΧΟ. Ἔπαθες -

ΟΙ. Ἔπαθον ἄλαστ’ ἔχειν.

ΧΟ. Ἔρεξας -

ΟΙ. Οὐκ ἔρεξα.

ΧΟ. Τί γάρ;

ΟΙ. Ἐδεξάμην
δῶρον ὃ μήποτ’ ἐγὼ ταλακάρδιος
ἐπωφελήσας πόλεος ἐξελέσθαι.

ΧΟ. Δύστανε, τί γάρ; ἔθου φόνον - Ant. 2 .

ΟΙ. Τί τοῦτο; τί δ’ ἐθέλεις μαθεῖν;

ΧΟ. πατρός;

ΟΙ. Παπαῖ, δευτέραν ἔπαισας, ἐπὶ νόσῳ νόσον.
545 ΧΟ. Ἔκανες -

ΟΙ. Ἔκανον. Ἔχει δέ μοι -

ΧΟ. Τί τοῦτο;

ΟΙ. πρὸς δίκας τι.

ΧΟ. Τί γάρ;

ΟΙ. Ἐγὼ φράσω·
καὶ γὰρ ἄνους ἐφόνευσα καὶ ὤλεσα·

νόμῳ δὲ καθαρός, ἄϊδρις ἐς τόδ’ ἦλθον.

ΧΟ. Καὶ μὴν ἄναξ ὅδ’ ἡμὶν Αἰγέως γόνος
Θησεὺς κατ’ ὀμφὴν σὴν ἀποσταλεὶς πάρα.

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ
Πολλῶν ἀκούων ἔν τε τῷ πάρος χρόνῳ
τὰς αἱματηρὰς ὀμμάτων διαφθορὰς
ἔγνωκά σ’, ὦ παῖ Λαΐου, τανῦν θ’ ὁδοῖς
ἐν ταῖσδ’ ἀκούων μᾶλλον ἐξεπίσταμαι.
Σκευή τε γάρ σε καὶ τὸ δύστηνον κάρα
δηλοῦτον ἡμῖν ὅνθ’ ὃς εἶ, καί σ’ οἰκτίσας
θέλω ‘περέσθαι, δύσμορ’ Οἰδίπου, τίνα
πόλεως ἐπέστης προστροπὴν ἐμοῦ τ’ ἔχων.
αὐτός τε χἠ σὴ δύσμορος παραστάτις.
Δίδασκε· δεινὴν γάρ τιν’ ἂν πρᾶξιν τύχοις
λέξας ὁποίας ἐξαφισταίμην ἐγώ,
ὃς οἶδα καὐτὸς ὡς ἐπαιδεύθην ξένος,
ὥσπερ σύ, χὥς τις πλεῖστ’ ἀνὴρ ἐπὶ ξένης
ἤθλησα κινδυνεύματ’ ἐν τὠμῷ κάρᾳ·
ὥστε ξένον γ’ ἂν οὐδέν’ ὄνθ’, ὥσπερ σὺ νῦν,
ὑπεκτραποίμην μὴ οὐ συνεκσῴζειν· ἐπεὶ
ἔξοιδ’ ἀνὴρ ὢν χὤτι τῆς ἐς αὔριον
οὐδὲν πλέον μοι σοῦ μέτεστιν ἡμέρας.

ΟΙ. Θησεῦ, τὸ σὸν γενναῖον ἐν σμικρῷ λόγῳ
παρῆκεν ὥστε βραχέ’ ἐμοὶ δεῖσθαι φράσαι·
σὺ γάρ μ’ ὅς εἰμι κἀφ’ ὅτου πατρὸς γεγὼς
καὶ γῆς ὁποίας ἦλθον, εἰρηκὼς κυρεῖς·
ὥστ’ ἐστί μοι τὸ λοιπὸν οὐδὲν ἄλλο πλὴν
εἰπεῖν ἃ χρῄζω, χὠ λόγος διοίχεται.
ΘΗ. Τοῦτ’ αὐτὸ νῦν δίδασχ’, ὅπως ἂν ἐκμάθω.

ΟΙ. Δώσων ἱκάνω τοὐμὸν ἄθλιον δέμας
σοὶ δῶρον, οὐ σπουδαῖον εἰς ὄψιν· τὰ δὲ
κέρδη παρ’ αὐτοῦ κρείσσον’ ἢ μορφὴ καλή.

ΘΗ. Ποῖον δὲ κέρδος ἀξιοῖς ἥκειν φέρων;
ΟΙ. Χρόνῳ μάθοις ἄν, οὐχὶ τῷ παρόντι που.

ΘΗ. Ποίῳ γὰρ ἡ σὴ προσφορὰ δηλώσεται;

ΟΙ. Ὅταν θάνω ‘γὼ καὶ σύ μου ταφεὺς γένῃ.

ΘΗ. Τὰ λοίσθι’ αἰτῇ τοῦ βίου, τὰ δ’ ἐν μέσῳ
ἢ λῆστιν ἴσχεις ἢ δι’ οὐδενὸς ποιῇ.
ΟΙ. Ἐνταῦθα γάρ μοι κεῖνα συγκομίζεται.

ΘΗ. Ἀλλ’ ἐν βραχεῖ δὴ τήνδε μ’ ἐξαιτῇ χάριν.

ΟΙ. Ὅρα γε μήν· οὐ σμικρός, οὔχ, ἀγὼν ὅδε.

ΘΗ. Πότερα τὰ τῶν σῶν ἐκγόνων ἢ ‘μοῦ λέγεις;

ΟΙ. Κεῖνοι κομίζειν κεῖσ’ ἀναγκάζουσί με.
ΘΗ. Ἀλλ’, εἰ θέλοντά γ’; οὐδὲ σοὶ φεύγειν καλόν.

ΟΙ. Ἀλλ’ οὐδ’, ὅτ’ αὐτὸς ἤθελον, παρίεσαν.

ΘΗ. Ὦ μῶρε, θυμὸς δ’ ἐν κακοῖς οὐ ξύμφορον.

ΟΙ. Ὅταν μάθῃς μου, νουθέτει· τανῦν δ’ ἔα.

ΘΗ. Δίδασκ’· ἄνευ γνώμης γὰρ οὔ με χρὴ λέγειν.
ΟΙ. Πέπονθα, Θησεῦ, δεινὰ πρὸς κακοῖς κακά.

ΘΗ. Ἦ τὴν παλαιὰν ξυμφορὰν γένους ἐρεῖς;

ΟΙ. Οὐ δῆτ’, ἐπεὶ πᾶς τοῦτό γ’ Ἑλλήνων θροεῖ.

ΘΗ. Τί γὰρ τὸ μεῖζον ἢ κατ’ ἄνθρωπον νοσεῖς;

ΟΙ. Οὕτως ἔχει μοι· γῆς ἐμῆς ἀπηλάθην
πρὸς τῶν ἐμαυτοῦ σπερμάτων· ἔστιν δέ μοι
πάλιν κατελθεῖν μήποθ’, ὡς πατροκτόνῳ.

ΘΗ. Πῶς δῆτά σ’ ἂν πεμψαίαθ’, ὥστ’ οἰκεῖν δίχα;

ΟΙ. Τὸ θεῖον αὐτοὺς ἐξαναγκάσει στόμα.

ΘΗ. Ποῖον πάθος δείσαντας ἐκ χρηστηρίων;
ΟΙ. Ὅτι σφ’ ἀνάγκη τῇδε πληγῆναι χθονί.

ΘΗ. Καὶ πῶς γένοιτ’ ἂν τἀμὰ κἀκείνων πικρά;

ΟΙ. Ὦ φίλτατ’ Αἰγέως παῖ, μόνοις οὐ γίγνεται
θεοῖσι γῆρας οὐδὲ κατθανεῖν ποτε,
τὰ δ’ ἄλλα συγχεῖ πάνθ’ ὁ παγκρατὴς χρόνος·
φθίνει μὲν ἰσχὺς γῆς, φθίνει δὲ σώματος.
θνῄσκει δὲ πίστις, βλαστάνει δ’ ἀπιστία,
καὶ πνεῦμα ταὐτὸν οὔποτ’ οὔτ’ ἐν ἀνδράσιν
Φίλοις βέβηκεν οὔτε πρὸς πόλιν πόλει·
τοῖς μὲν γὰρ ἤδη, τοῖς δ’ ἐν ὑστέρῳ χρόνῳ
τὰ τερπνὰ πικρὰ γίγνεται καὐθις φίλα.
Καὶ ταῖσι Θήβαις εἰ τανῦν εὐημερεῖ
καλῶς τὰ πρὸς σέ, μυρίας ὁ μυρίος
χρόνος τεκνοῦται νύκτας ἡμέρας τ’ ἰών.
ἐν αἷς τὰ νῦν ξύμφωνα δεξιώματα

δόρει διασκεδῶσιν ἐκ σμικροῦ λόγου·
ἵν’ οὐμὸς εὔδων καὶ κεκρυμμένος νέκυς
ψυχρός ποτ’ αὐτῶν θερμὸν αἷμα πίεται,
εἰ Ζεὺς ἔτι Ζεὺς χὠ Διὸς Φοῖβος σαφής.
Ἀλλ’ οὐ γὰρ αὐδᾶν ἡδὺ τἀκίνητ’ ἔπη,
ἔα μ’ ἐν οἷσιν ἠρξάμην, τὸ σὸν μόνον
πιστὸν φυλάσσων· κοὔποτ’ Οἰδίπουν ἐρεῖς
ἀχρεῖον οἰκητῆρα δέξασθαι τόπων
τῶν ἐνθάδ’, εἴπερ μὴ θεοὶ ψεύσουσί με.

ΧΟ. Ἄναξ, πάλαι καὶ ταῦτα καὶ τοιαῦτ’ ἔπη
γῇ τῇδ’ ὅδ’ ἀνὴρ ὡς τελῶν ἐφαίνετο.

ΘΗ. Τίς δῆτ’ ἂν ἀνδρὸς εὐμένειαν ἐκβάλοι
τοιοῦδ’; ὅτῳ πρῶτον μὲν ἡ δορύξενος
κοινὴ παρ’ ἡμῖν αἰέν ἐστιν ἑστία,
ἔπειτα δ’ ἱκέτης δαιμόνων ἀφιγμένος
γῇ τῇδε κἀμοὶ δασμὸν οὐ σμικρὸν τίνει.
Ἀγὼ σεβισθεὶς οὔποτ’ ἐκβαλῶ χάριν
τὴν τοῦδε, χώρᾳ δ’ ἔμπαλιν κατοικιῶ.
Εἰ δ’ ἐνθάδ’ ἡδὺ τῷ ξένῳ μίμνειν, σέ νιν
τάξω φυλάσσειν· εἰ δ’ ἐμοῦ στείχειν μέτα
τόδ’ ἡδὺ - τούτων, Οἰδίπου, δίδωμί σοι
κρίναντι χρῆσθαι· τῇδε γὰρ ξυνοίσομαι.

ΟΙ. Ὦ Ζεῦ, διδοίης τοῖσι τοιούτοισιν εὖ.

ΘΗ. Τί δῆτα χρῄζεις; ἦ δόμους στείχειν ἐμούς;

ΟΙ. Εἴ μοι θέμις γ’ ἦν· ἀλλ’ ὁ χῶρός ἐσθ’ ὅδε -

ΘΗ. Ἐν ᾧ τί πράξεις; οὐ γὰρ ἀντιστήσομαι·

ΟΙ. ἐν ᾧ κρατήσω τῶν ἔμ’ ἐκβεβληκότων -

ΘΗ. Μέγ’ ἂν λέγοις δώρημα τῆς ξυνουσίας.

ΟΙ. εἰ σοί γ’ ἅπερ φῂς ἐμμενεῖ τελοῦντί μοι.

ΘΗ. Θάρσει τὸ τοῦδέ γ’ ἀνδρός· οὔ σε μὴ προδῶ.

ΟΙ. Οὔτοι σ’ ὑφ’ ὅρκου γ’ ὡς κακὸν πιστώσομαι.

ΘΗ. Οὔκουν πέρα γ’ ἂν οὐδὲν ἢ λόγῳ φέροις.

ΟΙ. Πῶς οὖν ποιήσεις;

ΘΗ. Τοῦ μάλιστ’ ὄκνος σ’ ἔχει;

ΟΙ. Ἥξουσιν ἄνδρες -

ΘΗ. Ἀλλὰ τοῖσδ’ ἔσται μέλον.

ΟΙ. Ὅρα με λείπων -

ΘΗ. Μὴ δίδασχ’ ἃ χρή με δρᾶν.

ΟΙ. Ὀκνοῦντ’ ἀνάγκη -

ΘΗ. Τοὐμὸν οὐκ ὀκνεῖ κέαρ.

ΟΙ. Οὐκ οἶσθ’ ἀπειλάς -

ΘΗ. Οἶδ’ ἐγώ σε μή τινα
ἐνθένδ’ ἀπάξοντ’ ἄνδρα πρὸς βίαν ἐμοῦ.
Πολλαὶ δ’ ἀπειλαὶ πολλὰ δὴ μάτην ἔπη
θυμῷ κατηπείλησαν, ἀλλ’ ὁ νοῦς ὅταν
αὐτοῦ γένηται, φροῦδα τἀπειλήματα.
Κείνοις δ’ ἴσως κεἰ δείν’ ἐπερρώσθη λέγειν
τῆς σῆς ἀγωγῆς, οἶδ’ ἐγώ, φανήσεται
μακρὸν τὸ δεῦρο πέλαγος οὐδὲ πλώσιμον.
Θαρσεῖν μὲν οὖν ἔγωγε κἄνευ τῆς ἐμῆς
γνώμης ἐπαινῶ, Φοῖβος εἰ προὔπεμψέ σε·
ὅμως δὲ κἀμοῦ μὴ παρόντος οἶδ’ ὅτι
τοὐμὸν φυλάξει σ’ ὄνομα μὴ πάσχειν κακῶς.

ΧΟ. Εὐίππου, ξένε, τᾶσδε χώ-Str. 1 .
ρας ἵκου τὰ κράτιστα γᾶς ἔπαυλα,
670 τὸν ἀργῆτα Κολωνόν, ἔνθ’
ἁ λίγεια μινύρεται
θαμίζουσα μάλιστ’ ἀη-
δὼν χλωραῖς ὑπὸ βάσσαις,
τὸν οἰνῶπα νέμουσα κισ-
675 σὸν καὶ τὰν ἄβατον θεοῦ
φυλλάδα μυριόκαρπον ἀνήλιον
ἀνήνεμόν τε πάντων
χειμώνων· ἵν’ ὁ Βακχιώ-
τας ἀεὶ Διόνυσος ἐμβατεύει
680 θείαις ἀμφιπολῶν τιθήναις.
Θάλλει δ’ οὐρανίας ὑπ’ ἄ-Ant. 1 .
χνας ὁ καλλίβοτρυς κατ’ ἦμαρ αἰεὶ
νάρκισσος, μεγάλαιν θεαῖν
ἀρχαῖον στεφάνωμ’, ὅ τε
685 χρυσαυγὴς κρόκος· οὐδ’ ἄυ-
πνοι κρῆναι μινύθουσιν
Κηφισοῦ νομάδες ῥεέ-
θρων, ἀλλ’ αἰὲν ἐπ’ ἤματι
ὠκυτόκος πεδίων ἐπινίσεται
690 ἀκηράτῳ σὺν ὄμβρῳ
στερνούχου χθονός· οὐδὲ Μου-
σᾶν χοροί νιν ἀπεστύγησαν, οὐδ’ αὖ
ἁ χρυσάνιος Ἀφροδίτα.
Ἔστιν δ’ οἷον ἐγὼ γᾶς Str. 2 .
695 Ἀσίας οὐκ ἐπακούω,
οὐδ’ ἐν τᾷ μεγάλᾳ Δωρίδι νάσῳ
Πέλοπος πώποτε βλαστὸν
φύτευμ’ ἀχείρωτον αὐτοποιόν,
ἐγχέων φόβημα δαΐων,
700 ὃ τᾷδε θάλλει μέγιστα χώρᾳ,
γλαυκᾶς παιδοτρόφου φύλλον ἐλαίας·
τὸ μέν τις οὐ νεαρὸς οὔτε γήρᾳ
σημαίνων ἁλιώσει χερὶ πέρσας·
ὁ γὰρ αἰὲν ὁρῶν κύκλος
705 λεύσσει νιν Μορίου Διὸς

χὰ γλαυκῶπις Ἀθάνα.
Ἄλλον δ’ αἶνον ἔχω μα-Ant. 2 .
τροπόλει τᾷδε κράτιστον,
δῶρον τοῦ μεγάλου δαίμονος, εἰπεῖν,
710 ‹ἐμὸν› αὔχημα μέγιστον,
εὔιππον, εὔπωλον, εὐθάλασσον.
Ὦ παῖ Κρόνου, σὺ γάρ νιν εἰς
τόδ’ εἶσας αὔχημ’, ἄναξ Ποσειδάν,
ἵπποισιν τὸν ἀκεστῆρα χαλινὸν
715 πρώταισι ταῖσδε κτίσας ἀγυιαῖς·
ἃ δ’ εὐήρετμος ἔκπαγλ’ ἁλία χερ-
σὶ παραπτομένα πλάτα
θρῴσκει, τῶν ἑκατομπόδων
Νηρήδων ἀκόλουθος.
720 ΑΝ. Ὦ πλεῖστ’ ἐπαίνοις εὐλογούμενον πέδον,
νῦν σὸν τὰ λαμπρὰ ταῦτα δὴ φαίνειν ἔπη.

ΟΙ. Τί δ’ ἔστιν, ὦ παῖ, καινόν;

ΑΝ. Ἄσσον ἔρχεται
Κρέων ὅδ’ ἡμῖν οὐκ ἄνευ πομπῶν, πάτερ.

ΟΙ. Ὦ φίλτατοι γέροντες, ἐξ ὑμῶν ἐμοὶ
725 φαίνοιτ’ ἂν ἤδη τέρμα τῆς σωτηρίας.

ΧΟ. Θάρσει, παρέσται. Καὶ γάρ, εἰ γέρων ἐγώ,
τὸ τῆσδε χώρας οὐ γεγήρακεν σθένος.

ΚΡΕΩΝ
Ἄνδρες χθονὸς τῆσδ᾽ εὐγενεῖς οἰκήτορες,
ὁρῶ τιν᾽ ὑμᾶς ὀμμάτων εἰληφότας
730 φόβον νεώρη τῆς ἐμῆς ἐπεισόδου·
ὃν μήτ᾽ ὀκνεῖτε μήτ᾽ ἀφῆτ᾽ ἔπος κακόν.

Ἥκω γὰρ οὐχ ὡς δρᾶν τι βουληθείς, ἐπεὶ
γέρων μέν εἰμι, πρὸς πόλιν δ’ ἐπίσταμαι
σθένουσαν ἥκων, εἴ τιν’ Ἑλλάδος, μέγα·
ἀλλ’ ἄνδρα τόνδε τηλικόσδ’ ἀπεστάλην
πείσων ἕπεσθαι πρὸς τὸ Καδμείων πέδον,
οὐκ ἐξ ἑνὸς στείλαντος ἀλλ’ ἀνδρῶν ὑπὸ
πάντων κελευσθείς, οὕνεχ’ ἥκέ μοι γένει
τὰ τοῦδε πενθεῖν πήματ’ εἰς πλεῖστον πόλεως.
Ἀλλ’, ὦ ταλαίπωρ’ Οἰδίπους, κλύων ἐμοῦ
ἰκοῦ πρὸς οἴκους· πᾶς σε Καδμείων λεὼς
καλεῖ δικαίως, ἐκ δὲ τῶν μάλιστ’ ἐγώ,
ὅσῳπερ, εἰ μὴ πλεῖστον ἀνθρώπων ἔφυν
κάκιστος, ἀλγῶ τοῖσι σοῖς κακοῖς, γέρον,
ὁρῶν σε τὸν δύστηνον ὄντα μὲν ξένον,
ἀεὶ δ’ ἀλήτην κἀπὶ προσπόλου μιᾶς
βιοστερῆ χωροῦντα, τὴν ἐγὼ τάλας
οὐκ ἄν ποτ’ ἐς τοσοῦτον αἰκίας πεσεῖν
ἔδοξ’, ὅσον πέπτωκεν ἥδε δύσμορος,
ἀεί σε κηδεύουσα καὶ τὸ σὸν κάρα
πτωχῷ διαίτῃ, τηλικοῦτος, οὐ γάμων
ἔμπειρος, ἀλλὰ τοὐπιόντος ἁρπάσαι.
Ἆρ’ ἄθλιον τοὔνειδος, ὦ τάλας ἐγώ,
ὠνείδισ’ εἰς σὲ κἀμὲ καὶ τὸ πᾶν γένος;
ἀλλ’, οὐ γὰρ ἔστι τἀμφανῆ κρύπτειν, σύ νυν
πρὸς θεῶν πατρῴων, Οἰδίπους, πεισθεὶς ἐμοὶ
κρύψον θελήσας ἄστυ καὶ δόμους μολεῖν
τοὺς σοὺς πατρῴους, τήνδε τὴν πόλιν φίλως
εἰπών· ἐπαξία γάρ· ἡ δ’ οἴκοι πλέον
δίκῃ σέβοιτ’ ἂν οὖσα σὴ πάλαι τροφός.

ΟΙ. Ὦ πάντα τολμῶν κἀπὸ παντὸς ἂν φέρων
λόγου δικαίου μηχάνημα ποικίλον,
τί ταῦτα πειρᾷ κἀμὲ δεύτερον θέλεις
ἑλεῖν ἐν οἷς μάλιστ’ ἂν ἀλγοίην ἁλούς;
Πρόσθεν τε γάρ με τοῖσιν οἰκείοις κακοῖς
νοσοῦνθ’, ὅτ’ ἦν μοι τέρψις ἐκπεσεῖν χθονός,

οὐκ ἤθελες θέλοντι προσθέσθαι χάριν,
ἀλλ᾽ ἡνίκ᾽ ἤδη μεστὸς ἦ θυμούμενος
καὶ τοὺν δόμοισιν ἦν διαιτᾶσθαι γλυκύ,
τότ᾽ ἐξεώθεις κἀξέβαλλες, οὐδέ σοι
τὸ συγγενὲς τοῦτ᾽ οὐδαμῶς τότ᾽ ἦν φίλον·
νῦν τ᾽ αὖθις, ἡνίκ᾽ εἰσορᾷς πόλιν τέ μοι
ξυνοῦσαν εὔνουν τήνδε καὶ γένος τὸ πᾶν,
πειρᾷ μετασπᾶν, σκληρὰ μαλθακῶς λέγων.
Καίτοι τίς αὕτη τέρψις ἄκοντας φιλεῖν;
ὥσπερ τις εἴ σοι λιπαροῦντι μὲν τυχεῖν
μηδὲν διδοίη μηδ᾽ ἐπαρκέσαι θέλοι,
πλήρη δ᾽ ἔχοντι θυμὸν ὧν χρῄζοις, τότε
δωροῖθ᾽, ὅτ᾽ οὐδὲν ἡ χάρις χάριν φέροι·
ἆρ᾽ ἂν ματαίου τῆσδ᾽ ἂν ἡδονῆς τύχοις;
τοιαῦτα μέντοι καὶ σὺ προσφέρεις ἐμοί,
λόγῳ μὲν ἐσθλά, τοῖσι δ᾽ ἔργοισιν κακά.
Φράσω δὲ καὶ τοῖσδ᾽, ὡς σε δηλώσω κακόν.
Ἥκεις ἔμ᾽ ἄξων, οὐχ ἵν᾽ ἐς δόμους ἄγῃς,
ἀλλ᾽ ὡς πάραυλον οἰκίσῃς, πόλις δέ σοι
κακῶν ἄνατος τῆσδ᾽ ἀπαλλαχθῇ χθονός.
Οὐκ ἔστι σοι ταῦτ᾽, ἀλλά σοι τάδ᾽ ἔστ᾽, ἐκεῖ
χώρας ἀλάστωρ οὐμὸς ἐνναίων ἀεί·
ἔστιν δὲ παισὶ τοῖς ἐμοῖσι τῆς ἐμῆς
χθονὸς λαχεῖν τοσοῦτον, ἐνθανεῖν μόνον.
Ἆρ᾽ οὐκ ἄμεινον ἢ σὺ τἀν Θήβαις φρονῶ;
πολλῷ γ᾽, ὅσῳπερ κἀκ σαφεστέρων κλύω,
Φοίβου τε καὐτοῦ Ζηνός, ὃς κείνου πατήρ.
Τὸ σὸν δ᾽ ἀφῖκται δεῦρ᾽ ὑπόβλητον στόμα,
πολλὴν ἔχον στόμωσιν· ἐν δὲ τῷ λέγειν
κάκ᾽ ἂν λάβοις τὰ πλείον᾽ ἢ σωτήρια.
Ἀλλ᾽ οἶδα γάρ σε ταῦτα μὴ πείθων, ἵθι,
ἡμᾶς δ᾽ ἔα ζῆν ἐνθάδ᾽· οὐ γὰρ ἂν κακῶς
οὐδ᾽ ὧδ᾽ ἔχοντες ζῷμεν, εἰ τερποίμεθα.
ΚΡ. Πότερα νομίζεις δυστυχεῖν ἔμ᾽ ἐς τὰ σὰ
ἢ σ᾽ εἰς τὰ σαυτοῦ μᾶλλον ἐν τῷ νῦν λόγῳ;

ΟΙ. Ἐμοὶ μέν ἐσθ’ ἥδιστον εἰ σὺ μήτ’ ἐμὲ
πείθειν οἷός τ’ εἶ μήτε τούσδε τοὺς πέλας.

ΚΡ. Ὦ δύσμορ’, οὐδὲ τῷ χρόνῳ φύσας φανῇ
805 φρένας ποτ’, ἀλλὰ λῦμα τῷ γήρᾳ τρέφῃ;

ΟΙ. Γλώσσῃ σὺ δεινός· ἄνδρα δ’ οὐδέν’ οἶδ’ ἐγὼ
δίκαιον ὅστις ἐξ ἅπαντος εὖ λέγει.

ΚΡ. Χωρὶς τό τ’ εἰπεῖν πολλὰ καὶ τὸ καίρια.

ΟΙ. Ὡς δὴ σὺ βραχέα, ταῦτα δ’ ἐν καιρῷ λέγεις.
810 ΚΡ. Οὐ δῆθ’ ὅτῳ γε νοῦς ἴσος καὶ σοὶ πάρα.

ΟΙ. Ἄπελθ’, ἐρῶ γὰρ καὶ πρὸ τῶνδε, μηδέ με
φύλασσ’ ἐφορμῶν ἔνθα χρὴ ναίειν ἐμέ.

ΚΡ. Μαρτύρομαι τούσδ’, οὐ σέ. Πρὸς δὲ τοὺς φίλους
οἷ’ ἀνταμείβῃ ῥήματ’, ἦν σ’ ἔλω ποτέ -
815 ΟΙ. Τίς δ’ ἄν με τῶνδε συμμάχων ἕλοι βίᾳ;

ΚΡ. Ἦ μὴν σὺ κἄνευ τοῦδε λυπηθεὶς ἔσῃ.

ΟΙ. Ποίῳ σὺν ἔργῳ τοῦτ’ ἀπειλήσας ἔχεις;

ΚΡ. Παίδοιν δυοῖν σοι τὴν μὲν ἀρτίως ἐγὼ
ξυναρπάσας ἔπεμψα, τὴν δ’ ἄξω τάχα.
820 ΟΙ. Οἴμοι.

ΚΡ. Τάχ’ ἔξεις μᾶλλον οἰμώζειν τάδε.

ΟΙ. Τὴν παῖδ’ ἔχεις μου;

ΚΡ. Τήνδε τ’ οὐ μακροῦ χρόνου.

ΟΙ. Ἰὼ ξένοι, τί δράσετ’; ἦ προδώσετε,
κοὐκ ἐξελᾶτε τὸν ἀσεβῆ τῆσδε χθονός;

ΧΟ. Χώρει, ξέν’, ἔξω θᾶσσον· οὔτε γὰρ τὰ νῦν
825 δίκαια πράσσεις οὔθ’ ἃ πρόσθεν εἴργασαι.

ΚΡ. Ὑμῖν ἂν εἴη τήνδε καιρὸς ἐξάγειν
ἄκουσαν, εἰ θέλουσα μὴ πορεύσεται.

ΑΝ. Οἴμοι τάλαινα, ποῖ φύγω; ποίαν λάβω
θεῶν ἄρηξιν ἢ βροτῶν;

ΧΟ. Τί δρᾷς, ξένε·
830 ΚΡ. Οὐχ ἄψομαι τοῦδ’ ἀνδρός, ἀλλὰ τῆς ἐμῆς.

ΟΙ. Ὦ γῆς ἄνακτες.

ΧΟ. Ὦ ξέν’, οὐ δίκαια δρᾷς.

ΚΡ. Δίκαια.

ΧΟ. Πῶς δίκαια;

ΚΡ. Τοὺς ἐμοὺς ἄγω.

ΟΙ. Ἰὼ πόλις. Str.

ΧΟ. Τί δρᾷς, ὦ ξέν’; οὐκ ἀφήσεις; τάχ’ εἰς
835 βάσανον εἶ χερῶν.

ΚΡ. Εἶργου.

ΧΟ. Σοῦ μὲν οὔ, τάδε γε μωμένου.

ΚΡ. Πόλει μάχῃ γάρ, εἴ τι πημανεῖς ἐμέ.

ΟΙ. Οὐκ ἠγόρευον ταῦτ’ ἐγώ;

ΧΟ. Μέθες χεροῖν
τὴν παῖδα θᾶσσον.

ΚΡ. Μὴ ‘πίτασσ’ ἃ μὴ κρατεῖς.
840 ΧΟ. Χαλᾶν λέγω σοι.

ΚΡ. Σοὶ δ’ ἔγωγ’ ὁδοιπορεῖν.

ΧΟ. Πρόβαθ’ ὦδε, βᾶτε, βᾶτ’, ἔντοποι·
πόλις ἐναίρεται, πόλις ἐμά, σθένει·
πρόβαθ’ ὦδέ μοι.

ΑΝ. Ἀφέλκομαι δύστηνος, ὦ ξένοι, ξένοι.
ΟΙ. Ποῦ, τέκνον, εἶ μοι;

ΑΝ. Πρὸς βίαν πορεύομαι.

ΟΙ. Ὄρεξον, ὦ παῖ, χεῖρας.

ΑΝ. Ἀλλ’ οὐδὲν σθένω.

ΚΡ. Οὐκ ἄξεθ’ ὑμεῖς;

ΟΙ. Ὦ τάλας ἐγώ, τάλας.

ΚΡ. Οὔκουν ποτ’ ἐκ τούτοιν γε μὴ σκήπτροιν ἔτι
ὁδοιπορήσεις· ἀλλ’ ἐπεὶ νικᾶν θέλεις
πατρίδα ‹τε› τὴν σὴν καὶ φίλους, ὑφ’ ὧν ἐγὼ
ταχθεὶς τάδ’ ἔρδω καὶ τύραννος ὢν ὅμως,
νίκα· χρόνῳ γάρ, οἶδ’ ἐγώ, γνώσῃ τάδε,

ὀθούνεκ’ αὐτὸς αὐτὸν οὔτε νῦν καλὰ
δρᾷς οὔτε πρόσθεν εἰργάσω βίᾳ φίλων,
855 ὀργῇ χάριν δοὺς ἥ σ’ ἀεὶ λυμαίνεται.

ΧΟ. Ἐπίσχες αὐτοῦ, ξεῖνε.

ΚΡ. Μὴ ψαύειν λέγω.

ΧΟ. Οὕτοι σ’ ἀφήσω, τῶνδέ γ’ ἐστερημένος.

ΚΡ. Καὶ μεῖζον ἆρα ῥύσιον πόλει τάχα
θήσεις· ἐφάψομαι γὰρ οὐ ταύταιν μόναιν.
860 ΧΟ. Ἀλλ’ ἐς τί τρέψῃ;

ΚΡ. Τόνδ’ ἁπάξομαι λαβών.

ΧΟ. Δεινὸν λέγεις ‹σύ›.

ΚΡ. Τοῦτο νῦν πεπράξεται,
ἢν μή μ’ ὁ κραίνων τῆσδε γῆς ἀπειργάθῃ.

ΟΙ. Ὦ φθέγμ’ ἀναιδές, ἦ σὺ γὰρ ψαύεις ἐμοῦ;

ΚΡ. Αὐδῶ σιωπᾶν.

ΟΙ. Μὴ γὰρ αἵδε δαίμονες
865 θεῖέν μ’ ἄφωνον τῆσδε τῆς ἀρᾶς ἔτι,
ὅς μ’, ὦ κάκιστε, ψιλὸν ὄμμ’ ἀποσπάσας
πρὸς ὄμμασιν τοῖς πρόσθεν ἐξοίχῃ βίᾳ.
Τοιγὰρ σὲ καὐτὸν καὶ γένος τὸ σὸν θεῶν
ὁ πάντα λεύσσων Ἥλιος δοίη βίον
870 τοιοῦτον οἷον κἀμὲ γηρᾶναί ποτε.

ΚΡ. Ὁρᾶτε ταῦτα, τῆσδε γῆς ἐγχώριοι;

ΟΙ. Ὁρῶσι κἀμὲ καὶ σέ, καὶ φρονοῦσ’ ὅτι
ἔργοις πεπονθὼς ῥήμασίν σ’ ἀμύνομαι.

ΚΡ. Οὔτοι καθέξω θυμόν, ἀλλ’ ἄξω βίᾳ.
875 κεἰ μοῦνός εἰμι, τόνδε, καὶ γήρᾳ βαρύς.

ΟΙ. Ἰὼ τάλας. Ant.

ΧΟ. Ὅσον λῆμ’ ἔχων ἀφίκου, ξέν’, εἰ
τάδε δοκεῖς τελεῖν.

ΚΡ. Δοκῶ.

ΧΟ. Τάνδ’ ἄρ’ οὐκέτι νεμῶ πόλιν.
880 ΚΡ. Τοῖς τοι δικαίοις χὠ βραχὺς νικᾷ μέγαν.

ΟΙ. Ἀκούεθ’ οἷα φθέγγεται;

ΧΟ. Τά γ’ οὐ τελεῖ,
‹σαφῶς ἐγῷδα›.

ΚΡ. Ζεύς γ’ ἂν εἰδείη, σὺ δ’ οὔ.

ΧΟ. Ἆρ’ οὐχ ὕβρις τάδ’;

ΚΡ. Ὕβρις, ἀλλ’ ἀνεκτέα.

ΧΟ. Ἰὼ πᾶς λεώς, ἰὼ γᾶς πρόμοι,

μόλετε σὺν τάχει, μόλετ’· ἐπεὶ πέραν
περῶσ’ οἵδε δή.

ΘΗ. Τίς ποθ’ ἡ βοή; τί τοὔργον; ἐκ τίνος φόβου ποτὲ
βουθυτοῦντά μ’ ἀμφὶ βωμὸν ἔσχετ’ ἐναλίῳ θεῷ
τοῦδ’ ἐπιστάτῃ Κολωνοῦ; Λέξαθ’, ὡς εἰδῶ τὸ πᾶν,
οὗ χάριν δεῦρ’ ᾖξα θᾶσσον ἢ καθ’ ἡδονὴν ποδός.

ΟΙ. Ὦ φίλτατ’, ἔγνων γὰρ τὸ προσφώνημά σου,
πέπονθα δεινὰ τοῦδ’ ὑπ’ ἀνδρὸς ἀρτίως.

ΘΗ. Τὰ ποῖα ταῦτα; τίς δ’ ὁ πημήνας; λέγε.

ΟΙ. Κρέων ὅδ’ ὃν δέδορκας οἴχεται τέκνων
ἀποσπάσας μου τὴν μόνην ξυνωρίδα.

ΘΗ. Πῶς εἶπας;

ΟΙ. Οἷά περ πέπονθ’ ἀκήκοας.

ΘΗ. Οὔκουν τις ὡς τάχιστα προσπόλων μολὼν
πρὸς τούσδε βωμοὺς πάντ’ ἀναγκάσει λεὼν
ἄνιππον ἱππότην τε θυμάτων ἄπο

σπεύδειν ἀπὸ ῥυτῆρος, ἔνθα δίστομοι
μάλιστα συμβάλλουσιν ἐμπόρων ὁδοί,
ὡς μὴ παρέλθωσ’ αἱ κόραι, γέλως δ’ ἐγὼ
ξένῳ γένωμαι τῷδε χειρωθεὶς βίᾳ;
ἴθ’, ὡς ἄνωγα, σὺν τάχει. Τοῦτον δ’ ἐγώ,
εἰ μὲν δι’ ὀργῆς ἦκον ἧς ὅδ’ ἄξιος
ἄτρωτον οὐ μεθῆκ’ ἂν ἐξ ἐμῆς χερός·
νῦν δ’ οὕσπερ αὐτὸς τοὺς νόμους εἰσῆλθ’ ἔχων,
τούτοισι κοὐκ ἄλλοισιν ἁρμοσθήσεται.
Οὐ γάρ ποτ’ ἔξει τῆσδε τῆς χώρας, πρὶν ἂν
κείνας ἐναργεῖς δεῦρό μοι στήσῃς ἄγων·
ἐπεὶ δέδρακας οὔτ’ ἐμοῦ καταξίως
οὔθ’ ὧν πέφυκας αὐτὸς οὔτε σῆς χθονός,
ὅστις δίκαι’ ἀσκοῦσαν εἰσελθὼν πόλιν
κἄνευ νόμου κραίνουσαν οὐδέν, εἶτ’ ἀφεὶς
τὰ τῆσδε τῆς γῆς κύρι’ ὢδ’ ἐπεισπεσὼν
ἄγεις θ’ ἃ χρῄζεις καὶ παρίστασαι βίᾳ·
καί μοι πόλιν κένανδρον ἢ δούλην τινὰ
ἔδοξας εἶναι, κἄμ’ ἴσον τῷ μηδενί.
Καίτοι σε Θῆβαί γ’ οὐκ ἐπαίδευσαν κακόν·
οὐ γὰρ φιλοῦσιν ἄνδρας ἐκδίκους τρέφειν,
οὐδ’ ἄν σ’ ἐπαινέσειαν, εἰ πυθοίατο
συλῶντα τἀμὰ καὶ τὰ τῶν θεῶν, βίᾳ
ἄγοντα φωτῶν ἀθλίων ἱκτήρια.
Οὔκουν ἔγωγ’ ἄν, σῆς ἐπεμβαίνων χθονός,
οὐδ’ εἰ τὰ πάντων εἶχον ἐνδικώτατα,
ἄνευ γε τοῦ κραίνοντος, ὅστις ἦν, χθονὸς
οὔθ’ εἷλκον οὔτ’ ἂν ἦγον, ἀλλ’ ἠπιστάμην
ξένον παρ’ ἀστοῖς ὡς διαιτᾶσθαι χρεών.
Σὺ δ’ ἀξίαν οὐκ οὖσαν αἰσχύνεις πόλιν
τὴν αὐτὸς αὐτοῦ, καί σ’ ὁ πληθύων χρόνος
γέρονθ’ ὁμοῦ τίθησι καὶ τοῦ νοῦ κενόν.
Εἶπον μὲν οὖν καὶ πρόσθεν, ἐννέπω δὲ νῦν,
τὰς παῖδας ὡς τάχιστα δεῦρ’ ἄγειν τινά,
εἰ μὴ μέτοικος τῆσδε τῆς χώρας θέλεις
εἶναι βίᾳ τε κοὐχ ἑκών· καὶ ταῦτά σοι
τῷ νῷ θ’ ὁμοίως κἀπὸ τῆς γλώσσης λέγω.

ΧΟ. Ὁρᾷς ἵν’ ἥκεις, ὦ ξέν’; ὡς ἀφ’ ὧν μὲν εἶ
φαίνῃ δίκαιος, δρῶν δ’ ἐφευρίσκῃ κακά.

ΚΡ. Ἐγὼ οὔτ’ ἄνανδρον τήνδε τὴν πόλιν λέγω,
940 ὦ τέκνον Αἰγέως, οὔτ’ ἄβουλον, ὡς σὺ φῄς,
τοὔργον τόδ’ ἐξέπραξα, γιγνώσκων δ’ ὅτι
οὐδείς ποτ’ αὐτοὺς τῶν ἐμῶν ἂν ἐμπέσοι
ζῆλος ξυναίμων, ὥστ’ ἐμοῦ τρέφειν βίᾳ.
Ἥιδη δ’ ὀθούνεκ’ ἄνδρα καὶ πατροκτόνον
945 κἄναγνον οὐ δεξοίατ’, οὐδ’ ὅτῳ γάμοι
ξυνόντες ηὑρέθησαν ἀνόσιοι τέκνων.
Τοιοῦτον αὐτοῖς Ἄρεος εὔβουλον πάγον
ἐγὼ ξυνῄδη χθόνιον ὄνθ’, ὃς οὐκ ἐᾷ
τοιούσδ’ ἀλήτας τῇδ’ ὁμοῦ ναίειν πόλει·
950 ᾧ πίστιν ἴσχων τήνδ’ ἐχειρούμην ἄγραν.
Καὶ ταῦτ’ ἂν οὐκ ἔπρασσον, εἰ μή μοι πικρὰς
αὐτῷ τ’ ἀρὰς ἠρᾶτο καὶ τῳμῷ γένει·
ἀνθ’ ὧν πεπονθὼς ἠξίουν τάδ’ ἀντιδρᾶν·
θυμοῦ γὰρ οὐδέν ἐστι γῆρας ἄλλο πλὴν
955 θανεῖν· θανόντων δ’ οὐδὲν ἄλγος ἅπτεται.
Πρὸς ταῦτα πράξεις οἷον ἂν θέλῃς· ἐπεὶ
ἐρημία με, κεἰ δίκαι’ ὅμως λέγω,
σμικρὸν τίθησι· πρὸς δὲ τὰς πράξεις ὅμως,
καὶ τηλικόσδ’ ὤν, ἀντιδρᾶν πειράσομαι.
960 ΟΙ. Ὦ λῆμ’ ἀναιδές, τοῦ καθυβρίζειν δοκεῖς,
πότερον ἐμοῦ γέροντος ἢ σαυτοῦ, τόδε;
ὅστις φόνους μοι καὶ γάμους καὶ συμφορὰς
τοῦ σοῦ διῆκας στόματος, ἃς ἐγὼ τάλας
ἤνεγκον ἄκων· θεοῖς γὰρ ἦν οὕτω φίλον,
965 τάχ’ ἄν τι μηνίουσιν εἰς γένος πάλαι.
Ἐπεὶ καθ’ αὐτόν γ’ οὐκ ἂν ἐξεύροις ἐμοὶ
ἁμαρτίας ὄνειδος οὐδὲν ἀνθ’ ὅτου
τάδ’ εἰς ἐμαυτὸν τοὺς ἐμούς θ’ ἡμάρτανον.
Ἐπεὶ δίδαξον, εἴ τι θέσφατον πατρὶ
970 χρησμοῖσιν ἰκνεῖθ’ ὥστε πρὸς παίδων θανεῖν,

πῶς ἂν δικαίως τοῦτ᾽ ὀνειδίζοις ἐμοί,
ὃς οὔτε βλάστας πω γενεθλίους πατρός,
οὐ μητρὸς εἶχον, ἀλλ᾽ ἀγέννητος τότ᾽ ἦ;
Εἰ δ᾽ αὖ φανεὶς δύστηνος, ὡς ἐγὼ ‘φάνην,
975 ἐς χεῖρας ἦλθον πατρὶ καὶ κατέκτανον,
μηδὲν ξυνιεὶς ὧν ἔδρων εἰς οὕς τ᾽ ἔδρων,
πῶς ἂν τό γ᾽ ἄκον πρᾶγμ᾽ ἂν εἰκότως ψέγοις;
Μητρὸς δέ, τλῆμον, οὐκ ἐπαισχύνῃ γάμους
οὔσης ὁμαίμου σῆς μ᾽ ἀναγκάζων λέγειν
980 οἵους ἐρῶ τάχ᾽· οὐ γὰρ οὖν σιγήσομαι,
σοῦ γ᾽ εἰς τόδ᾽ ἐξελθόντος ἀνόσιον στόμα.
Ἔτικτε γάρ μ᾽ ἔτικτεν, ὤμοι μοι κακῶν,
οὐκ εἰδότ᾽ οὐκ εἰδυῖα, καὶ τεκοῦσά με
αὐτῆς ὄνειδος παῖδας ἐξέφυσέ μοι.
985 Ἀλλ᾽ ἓν γὰρ οὖν ἔξοιδα, σὲ μὲν ἑκόντ᾽ ἐμὲ
κείνην τε ταῦτα δυσστομεῖν· ἐγὼ δέ νιν
ἄκων ἔγημα, φθέγγομαί τ᾽ ἄκων τάδε.
Ἀλλ᾽ οὐ γὰρ οὔτ᾽ ἐν τοῖσδ᾽ ἀκούσομαι κακὸς
γάμοισιν οὔθ᾽ οἷς αἰὲν ἐμφέρεις σύ μοι
990 φόνους πατρῴους ἐξονειδίζων πικρῶς.
Ἓν γάρ μ᾽ ἄμειψαι μοῦνον ὧν σ᾽ ἀνιστορῶ·
εἴ τίς σε τὸν δίκαιον αὐτίκ᾽ ἐνθάδε
κτείνοι παραστάς, πότερα πυνθάνοι᾽ ἂν εἰ
πατήρ σ᾽ ὁ καίνων, ἢ τίνοι᾽ ἂν εὐθέως;
995 Δοκῶ μέν, εἴπερ ζῆν φιλεῖς, τὸν αἴτιον
τίνοι᾽ ἄν, οὐδὲ τοὔνδικον περιβλέποις.
Τοιαῦτα μέντοι καὐτὸς εἰσέβην κακά,
θεῶν ἀγόντων· οἷς ἐγὼ οὐδὲ τὴν πατρὸς
ψυχὴν ἂν οἶμαι ζῶσαν ἀντειπεῖν ἐμοί.
1000 Σὺ δ᾽, εἶ γὰρ οὐ δίκαιος, ἀλλ᾽ ἅπαν καλὸν
λέγειν νομίζων, ῥητὸν ἄρρητόν τ᾽ ἔπος,
τοιαῦτ᾽ ὀνειδίζεις με τῶνδ᾽ ἐναντίον.
Καί σοι τὸ Θησέως ὄνομα θωπεῦσαι καλόν,
καὶ τὰς Ἀθήνας, ὡς κατῴκηνται καλῶς·
1005 κᾆθ᾽ ὧδ᾽ ἐπαινῶν πολλὰ τοῦδ᾽ ἐκλανθάνῃ,
ὀθούνεκ᾽ εἴ τις γῆ θεοὺς ἐπίσταται
τιμᾶς σεβίζειν, ἥδε τοῦθ᾽ ὑπερφέρει·
ἀφ᾽ ἧς σὺ κλέψας τὸν ἱκέτην γέροντ᾽ ἐμὲ
αὐτόν τ᾽ ἐχειροῦ τὰς κόρας τ᾽ οἴχῃ λαβών.

Ἀνθ’ ὧν ἐγὼ νῦν τάσδε τὰς θεὰς ἐμοὶ
καλῶν ἱκνοῦμαι καὶ κατασκήπτω λιταῖς
ἐλθεῖν ἀρωγοὺς ξυμμάχους ‹θ’›, ἵν’ ἐκμάθῃς
οἵων ὑπ’ ἀνδρῶν ἥδε φρουρεῖται πόλις.

ΧΟ. Ὁ ξεῖνος, ὦναξ, χρηστός· αἱ δὲ συμφοραὶ
σῶν πανώλεις, ἄξιαι δ’ ἀμυναθεῖν.

ΘΗ. Ἅλις λόγων· ὡς οἱ μὲν ἐξηρπασμένοι
σπεύδουσιν, ἡμεῖς δ’ οἱ παθόντες ἔσταμεν.

ΚΡ. Τί δῆτ’ ἀμαυρῷ φωτὶ προστάσσεις ποεῖν;

ΘΗ. Ὁδοῦ κατάρχειν τῆς ἐκεῖ, πομπὸν δέ με
χωρεῖν, ἵν’ εἰ μὲν ἐν τόποισι τοῖσδ’ ἔχεις
τὰς παῖδας ἡμῶν, αὐτὸς ἐκδείξῃς ἐμοί·
εἰ δ’ ἐγκρατεῖς φεύγουσιν, οὐδὲν δεῖ πονεῖν·
ἄλλοι γὰρ οἱ σπεύδοντες, οὓς οὐ μή ποτε
χώρας φυγόντες τῆσδ’ ἐπεύξωνται θεοῖς.
Ἀλλ’ ἐξυφηγοῦ· γνῶθι δ’ ὡς ἔχων ἔχῃ
καί σ’ εἶλε θηρῶνθ’ ἡ Τύχη· τὰ γὰρ δόλῳ
τῷ μὴ δικαίῳ κτήματ’ οὐχὶ σῴζεται.
Κοὐκ ἄλλον ἔξεις εἰς τόδ’· ὡς ἔξοιδά σε
οὐ ψιλὸν οὐδ’ ἄσκευον ἐς τοσήνδ’ ὕβριν
ἥκοντα τόλμης τῆς παρεστώσης τανῦν,
ἀλλ’ ἔσθ’ ὅτῳ σὺ πιστὸς ὢν ἔδρας τάδε·
ἃ δεῖ μ’ ἀθρῆσαι, μηδὲ τήνδε τὴν πόλιν
ἑνὸς ποῆσαι φωτὸς ἀσθενεστέραν.
Νοεῖς τι τούτων, ἢ μάτην τὰ νῦν τέ σοι

δοκεῖ λελέχθαι χὥτε ταῦτ’ ἐμηχανῶ;

ΚΡ. Οὐδὲν σὺ μεμπτὸν ἐνθάδ’ ὢν ἐρεῖς ἐμοί·
οἴκοι δὲ χἠμεῖς εἰσόμεσθ’ ἃ χρὴ ποεῖν.

ΘΗ. Χωρῶν ἀπείλει νῦν· σὺ δ’ ἡμίν, Οἰδίπους,
ἔκηλος αὐτοῦ μίμνε, πιστωθεὶς ὅτι,
ἢν μὴ θάνω ‘γὼ πρόσθεν, οὐχὶ παύσομαι
πρὶν ἄν σε τῶν σῶν κύριον στήσω τέκνων.

ΟΙ. Ὄναιο, Θησεῦ, τοῦ τε γενναίου χάριν
καὶ τῆς πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἐνδίκου προμηθίας.

ΧΟ. Εἶην ὅθι δαΐων Str. 1 .
ἀνδρῶν τάχ’ ἐπιστροφαὶ
τὸν χαλκοβόαν Ἄρη
μείξουσιν, ἢ πρὸς Πυθίαις,
ἢ λαμπάσιν ἀκταῖς,
οὗ πότνιαι σεμνὰ τιθηνοῦνται τέλη
θνατοῖσιν ὧν καὶ χρυσέα
κλῃὶς ἐπὶ γλώσσᾳ βέβα-
κε προσπόλων Εὐμολπιδᾶν·
ἔνθ’ οἶμαι τὸν ἐγρεμάχαν
Θησέα καὶ τὰς διστόλους
ἀδμῆτας ἀδελφὰς
αὐτάρκει τάχ’ ἐμμείξειν βοᾷ
τούσδ’ ἀνὰ χώρους·
ἤ που τὸν ἐφέσπερον Ant. 1 .
πέτρας νιφάδος πελῶσ’

Οἰάτιδος ἐκ νομοῦ
πώλοισιν ἢ ῥιμφαρμάτοις
φεύγοντες ἀμίλλαις;
1065 Ἀλώσεται· δεινὸς ὁ προσχωρῶν Ἄρης,
δεινὰ δὲ Θησειδᾶν ἀκμά.
Πᾶς γὰρ ἀστράπτει χαλι-
νός, πᾶσα δ’ ὁρμᾶται κατὰ
ἀμπυκτήρια ‹νεαρῶν›
1070 ἄμβασις οἳ τὰν ἱππίαν
τιμῶσιν Ἀθάναν
καὶ τὸν πόντιον γαιάοχον
Ῥέας φίλον υἱόν.
Ἔρδουσ’ ἢ μέλλουσιν; ὡς Str. 2 .
1075 προμνᾶταί τί μοι
γνώμα τάχ’ ἀνσώσειν
τὰν δεινὰ τλᾶσαν, δεινὰ δ’ εὐροῦ-
σαν πρὸς αὐθαίμων πάθη.
Τελεῖ, τελεῖ Ζεύς τι κατ’ ἄμαρ·
1080 μάντις εἴμ’ ἐσθλῶν ἀγώνων.
Εἴθ’ ἀελλαία ταχύρρωστος πελειὰς
αἰθερίας νεφέλας
κύρσαιμι τῶνδ’ ἀγώνων
θεωρὸν θεῖσα τοὐμὸν ὄμμα.
1085 Ἰὼ Ζεῦ, πάνταρχε θεῶν, Ant. 2 .
παντόπτ’, ὦ, πόροις
γᾶς τᾶσδε δαμούχοις
σθένει ‘πινικείῳ τὸν εὖ-
αγρον τελειῶσαι λόχον,
1090 σεμνά τε παῖς Παλλὰς Ἀθάνα.
Καὶ τὸν ἀγρευτὰν Ἀπόλλω,
καὶ κασιγνήταν πυκνοστίκτων ὀπαδὸν
ὠκυπόδων ἐλάφων,
στέργω διπλᾶς ἀρωγὰς
1095 μολεῖν γᾷ τᾷδε καὶ πολίταις.
Ὦ ξεῖν’ ἀλῆτα, τῷ σκοπῷ μὲν οὐκ ἐρεῖς
ὡς ψευδόμαντις· τὰς κόρας γὰρ εἰσορῶ
τάσδ’ ἄσσον αὖθις ὧδε προσπολουμένας.

ΟΙ. Ποῦ ποῦ; τί φῄς; πῶς εἶπας;

ΑΝ. Ὦ πάτερ, πάτερ,
1100 τίς ἂν θεῶν σοι τόνδ’ ἄριστον ἄνδρ’ ἰδεῖν
δοίη, τὸν ἡμᾶς δεῦρο προσπέμψαντά σοι;

ΟΙ. Ὦ τέκνον, ἦ πάρεστον;

ΑΝ. Αἵδε γὰρ χέρες
Θησέως ἔσωσαν φιλτάτων τ’ ὀπαόνων.

ΟΙ. Προσέλθετ’, ὦ παῖ, πατρί, καὶ τὸ μηδαμὰ
1105 ἐλπισθὲν ἥξειν σῶμα βαστάσαι δότε.

ΑΝ. Αἰτεῖς ἃ τεύξῃ· σὺν πόθῳ γὰρ ἡ χάρις.

ΟΙ. Ποῦ δῆτα, ποῦ ‘στόν;

ΑΝ. Αἵδ’ ὁμοῦ πελάζομεν.

ΟΙ. Ὦ φίλτατ’ ἔρνη.

ΑΝ. Τῷ τεκόντι πᾶν φίλον.

ΟΙ. Ὦ σκῆπτρα φωτός.

ΑΝ. Δυσμόρου γε δύσμορα.
ΟΙ. Ἔχω τὰ φίλτατ’, οὐδ’ ἔτ’ ἂν πανάθλιος
θανὼν ἂν εἴην σφῷν παρεστώσαιν ἐμοί.
Ἐρείσατ’, ὦ παῖ, πλευρὸν ἀμφιδέξιον
ἐμφύντε τῷ φύσαντι, κἀναπαύσατον
τοῦ πρόσθ’ ἐρήμου τοῦδε δυστήνου πλάνου.
Καί μοι τὰ πραχθέντ’ εἴπαθ’ ὡς βράχιστ’, ἐπεὶ
ταῖς τηλικαῖσδε σμικρὸς ἐξαρκεῖ λόγος.

ΑΝ. Ὅδ’ ἔσθ’ ὁ σώσας· τοῦδε χρὴ κλύειν, πάτερ,
καὶ σοί γε τοὔργον τοὐμὸν εἶτ’ ἔσται βραχύ.

ΟΙ. Ὦ ξεῖνε, μὴ θαύμαζε πρὸς τὸ λιπαρές,
τέκν’ εἰ φανέντ’ ἄελπτα μηκύνω λόγον·
ἐπίσταμαι γὰρ τήνδε τὴν ἐς τάσδε μοι
τέρψιν παρ’ ἄλλου μηδενὸς πεφασμένην.
Σὺ γάρ νιν ἐξέσωσας, οὐκ ἄλλος βροτῶν,
καὶ σοὶ θεοὶ πόροιεν ὡς ἐγὼ θέλω,
αὐτῷ τε καὶ γῇ τῇδ’· ἐπεὶ τό γ’ εὐσεβὲς
μόνοις παρ’ ὑμῖν ηὗρον ἀνθρώπων ἐγὼ

καὶ τοὐπιεικὲς καὶ τὸ μὴ ψευδοστομεῖν·
εἰδὼς δ’ ἀμύνω τοῖσδε τοῖς λόγοις τάδε·
ἔχω γὰρ ἄχω διὰ σὲ κοὐκ ἄλλον βροτῶν,
καί μοι χέρ’, ὦναξ, δεξιάν τ’ ὄρεξον ὡς
ψαύσω φιλήσω τ’, εἰ θέμις, τὸ σὸν κάρα.
Καίτοι τί φωνῶ; πῶς σ’ ἂν ἄθλιος γεγὼς
θιγεῖν θελήσαιμ’ ἀνδρός, ᾧ τίς οὐκ ἔνι
κηλὶς κακῶν ξύνοικος; οὐκ ἔγωγέ σε,
οὐδ’ οὖν ἐάσω· τοῖς γὰρ ἐμπείροις βροτῶν
μόνοις οἷόν τε συνταλαιπωρεῖν τάδε.
Σὺ δ’ αὐτόθεν μοι χαῖρε, καὶ τὰ λοιπά μου
μέλου δικαίως, ὥσπερ ἐς τόδ’ ἡμέρας.

ΘΗ. Οὔτ’ εἴ τι μῆκος τῶν λόγων ἔθου πλέον,
τέκνοισι τερφθεὶς τοῖσδε θαυμάσας ἔχω,
οὐδ’ εἰ πρὸ τοὐμοῦ προὔλαβες τὰ τῶνδ’ ἔπη·
βάρος γὰρ ἡμᾶς οὐδὲν ἐκ τούτων ἔχει·
οὐ γὰρ λόγοισι τὸν βίον σπουδάζομεν
λαμπρὸν ποιεῖσθαι μᾶλλον ἢ τοῖς δρωμένοις.
Δείκνυμι δ’· ὧν γὰρ ὤμοσ’ οὐκ ἐψευσάμην
οὐδέν σε, πρέσβυ· τάσδε γὰρ πάρειμ’ ἄγων
ζώσας, ἀκραιφνεῖς τῶν κατηπειλημένων.
Χὤπως μὲν ἀγὼν οὗτος ᾔρέθη, τί δεῖ
κομπεῖν ἄ γ’ εἴσῃ καὐτὸς ἐκ ταύταιν ξυνών;
Λόγος δ’ ὃς ἐμπέπτωκεν ἀρτίως ἐμοὶ
στείχοντι δεῦρο, συμβαλοῦ γνώμην, ἐπεὶ
σμικρὸς μὲν εἰπεῖν, ἄξιος δὲ θαυμάσαι·
πρᾶγος δ’ ἀτίζειν οὐδὲν ἄνθρωπον χρεών.

ΟΙ. Τί δ’ ἔστι, τέκνον Αἰγέως; δίδασκέ με,
ὡς μὴ εἰδότ’ αὐτὸν μηδὲν ὢν σὺ πυνθάνῃ.

ΘΗ. Φασίν τιν’ ἡμῖν ἄνδρα, σοὶ μὲν ἔμπολιν
οὐκ ὄντα, συγγενῆ δέ, προσπεσόντα πως
βωμῷ καθῆσθαι τῷ Ποσειδῶνος, παρ’ ᾧ
θύων ἔκυρον, ἡνίχ’ ὡρμώμην ἐγώ.
1160 ΟΙ. Ποδαπόν; τί προσχρῄζοντα τῷ θακήματι;

ΘΗ. Οὐκ οἶδα πλὴν ἔν· σοῦ γάρ, ὡς λέγουσί μοι,
βραχύν τιν’ αἰτεῖ μῦθον οὐκ ὄγκου πλέων.

ΟΙ. Ποῖόν τιν’; οὐ γὰρ ἥδ’ ἔδρα σμικροῦ λόγου.

ΘΗ. Σοὶ φασὶν αὐτὸν ἐς λόγους ἐλθεῖν μολόντ’
1165 αἰτεῖν ἀπελθεῖν ‹τ’› ἀσφαλῶς τῆς δεῦρ’ ὁδοῦ.

ΟΙ. Τίς δῆτ’ ἂν εἴη τήνδ’ ὁ προσθακῶν ἔδραν;

ΘΗ. Ὅρα κατ’ Ἄργος εἴ τις ὑμὶν ἐγγενὴς
ἔσθ’, ὅστις ἄν σου τοῦτο προσχρῄζοι τυχεῖν.

ΟΙ. Ὦ φίλτατε, σχὲς οὕπερ εἶ.

ΘΗ. Τί δ’ ἔστι σοι;
1170 ΟΙ. Μή μου δεηθῇς -

ΘΗ. Πράγματος ποίου; λέγε.

ΟΙ. Ἔξοιδ’ ἀκούων τῶνδ’ ὅς ἐσθ’ ὁ προστάτης.

ΘΗ. Καὶ τίς ποτ’ ἐστίν, ὅν γ’ ἐγὼ ψέξαιμί τι;

ΟΙ. Παῖς οὐμός, ὦναξ, στυγνός, οὗ λόγων ἐγὼ
ἄλγιστ’ ἂν ἀνδρῶν ἐξανασχοίμην κλύων.
1175 ΘΗ. Τί δ’; οὐκ ἀκούειν ἔστι, καὶ μὴ δρᾶν ἃ μὴ
χρῄζεις; τί σοι τοῦτ’ ἐστὶ λυπηρὸν κλύειν;

ΟΙ. Ἔχθιστον, ὦναξ, φθέγμα τοῦθ’ ἥκει πατρί·
καὶ μή μ’ ἀνάγκῃ προσβάλῃς τάδ’ εἰκαθεῖν.

ΘΗ. Ἀλλ’ εἰ τὸ θάκημ’ ἐξαναγκάζει, σκόπει,
1180 μή σοι πρόνοι’ ᾖ τοῦ θεοῦ φυλακτέα.

ΑΝ. Πάτερ, πιθοῦ μοι, κεἰ νέα παραινέσω.
Τὸν ἄνδρ’ ἔασον τόνδε τῇ θ’ αὐτοῦ φρενὶ
χάριν παρασχεῖν τῷ θεῷ θ’ ἃ βούλεται,
καὶ νῷν ὕπεικε τὸν κασίγνητον μολεῖν.
1185 Οὐ γάρ σε, θάρσει, πρὸς βίαν παρασπάσει

γνώμης, ἃ μή σοι συμφέροντα λέξεται.
Λόγων δ’ ἀκοῦσαι τίς βλάβη; τά τοι κακῶς
ηὑρημέν’ ἔργα τῷ λόγῳ μηνύεται.
Ἔφυσας αὐτόν· ὥστε μηδὲ δρῶντά σε
τὰ τῶν κακίστων δυσσεβέστατ’, ὦ πάτερ,
θέμις σέ γ’ εἶναι κεῖνον ἀντιδρᾶν κακῶς.
Ἄλλαι γονεῦσι χἀτέροις γοναὶ κακαὶ
καὶ θυμὸς ὀξύς, ἀλλὰ νουθετούμενοι
φίλων ἐπῳδαῖς ἐξεπᾴδονται φύσιν.
Σὺ δ’ εἰς ἐκεῖνα, μὴ τὰ νῦν, ἀποσκόπει,
πατρῷα καὶ μητρῷα πήμαθ’ ἅπαθες·
κἂν κεῖνα λεύσσῃς, οἶδ’ ἐγώ, γνώσῃ κακοῦ
θυμοῦ τελευτὴν ὡς κακὴ προσγίγνεται.
Ἔχεις γὰρ οὐχὶ βαιὰ τἀνθυμήματα,
τῶν σῶν ἀδέρκτων ὀμμάτων τητώμενος.
Ἀλλ’ ἡμὶν εἶκε· λιπαρεῖν γὰρ οὐ καλὸν
δίκαια προσχρῄζουσιν, οὐδ’ αὐτὸν μὲν εὖ
πάσχειν, παθόντα δ’ οὐκ ἐπίστασθαι τίνειν.

ΟΙ. Τέκνον, βαρεῖαν ἡδονὴν νικᾶτέ με
λέγοντες· ἔστω δ’ οὖν ὅπως ὑμῖν φίλον.
Μόνον, ξέν’, εἴπερ κεῖνος ὧδ’ ἐλεύσεται,
μηδεὶς κρατείτω τῆς ἐμῆς ψυχῆς ποτε.

ΘΗ. Ἄπαξ τὰ τοιαῦτ’, οὐχὶ δὶς χρῄζω κλύειν,
ὦ πρέσβυ. Κομπεῖν δ’ οὐχὶ βούλομαι· σὺ δ’ ὢν
σῶς ἴσθ’, ἐάν περ κἀμέ τις σῴζῃ θεῶν.

ΧΟ. Ὅστις τοῦ πλέονος μέρους Str.
χρῄζει τοῦ μετρίου παρεὶς
ζώειν, σκαιοσύναν φυλάσ-
σων ἐν ἐμοὶ κατάδηλος ἔσται.

Ἐπεὶ πολλὰ μὲν αἱ μακραὶ
ἀμέραι κατέθεντο δὴ
λύπας ἐγγυτέρω, τὰ τέρ-
ποντα δ’ οὐκ ἂν ἴδοις ὅπου,
ὅταν τις ἐς πλέον πέσῃ
τοῦ δέοντος· ὁ δ’ ἐπίκουρος ἰσοτέλεστος,
Ἄϊδος ὅτε Μοῖρ’ ἀνυμέναιος
ἄλυρος ἄχορος ἀναπέφηνε,
θάνατος ἐς τελευτάν.
Μὴ φῦναι τὸν ἅπαντα νι- Ant.
κᾷ λόγον· τὸ δ’, ἐπεὶ φανῇ,
βῆναι κεῖθεν ὅθεν περ ἧκει, πολὺ δεύτερον, ὡς τάχιστα.
Ὡς εὖτ’ ἂν τὸ νέον παρῇ
κούφας ἀφροσύνας φέρον,
τίς πλάγχθη πολὺ μόχθος ἔξω; τίς οὐ καμάτων ἔνι;
φόνοι, στάσεις, ἔρις, μάχαι
καὶ φθόνος· τό τε κατάμεμπτον ἐπιλέλογχε
πύματον ἀκρατὲς ἀπροσόμιλον
γῆρας ἄφιλον, ἵνα πρόπαντα
κακᾷ κακῶν ξυνοικεῖ.
Ἐν ᾧ τλάμων ὅδ’, οὐκ ἐγὼ μόνος, Ep.
πάντοθεν βόρειος ὡς τις ἀκτὰ
κυματοπλὴξ χειμερία κλονεῖται,
ὣς καὶ τόνδε κατ’ ἄκρας
δειναὶ κυματοαγεῖς
ἄται κλονέουσιν ἀεὶ ξυνοῦσαι,
αἱ μὲν ἀπ’ ἀελίου δυσμᾶν,
αἱ δ’ ἀνατέλλοντος,
αἱ δ’ ἀνὰ μέσσαν ἀκτῖν’,
αἱ δ’ ἐννυχιᾶν ἀπὸ Ῥιπᾶν.

ΑΝ. Καὶ μὴν ὅδ’ ἡμῖν, ὡς ἔοικεν, ὁ ξένος
ἀνδρῶν γε μοῦνος, ὦ πάτερ, δι’ ὄμματος
ἀστακτὶ λείβων δάκρυον ὧδ’ ὁδοιπορεῖ.

ΟΙ. Τίς οὗτος;

ΑΝ. Ὅνπερ καὶ πάλαι κατείχομεν
γνώμῃ, πάρεστι δεῦρο Πολυνείκης ὅδε.

ΠΟΛΥΝΕΙΚΗΣ
Οἴμοι, τί δράσω; πότερα τἀμαυτοῦ κακὰ
πρόσθεν δακρύσω, παῖδες, ἢ τὰ τοῦδ’ ὁρῶν
πατρὸς γέροντος; ὃν ξένης ἐπὶ χθονὸς
σὺν σφῷν ἐφηύρηκ’ ἐνθάδ’ ἐκβεβλημένον
ἐσθῆτι σὺν τοιᾷδε, τῆς ὁ δυσφιλὴς
γέρων γέροντι συγκατῴκηκεν πίνος
πλευρὰν μαραίνων, κρατὶ δ’ ὀμματοστερεῖ
κόμη δι’ αὔρας ἀκτένιστος ᾄσσεται·
ἀδελφὰ δ’, ὡς ἔοικε, τούτοισιν φορεῖ
τὰ τῆς ταλαίνης νηδύος θρεπτήρια.
Ἀγὼ πανώλης ὅψ’ ἄγαν ἐκμανθάνω·
καὶ μαρτυρῶ κάκιστος ἀνθρώπων τροφαῖς
ταῖς σαῖσιν ἥκειν· τἀμὰ μὴ ‘ξ ἄλλων πύθῃ.
Ἀλλ’ ἔστι γὰρ καὶ Ζηνὶ σύνθακος θρόνων
Αἰδὼς ἐπ’ ἔργοις πᾶσι, καὶ πρὸς σοί, πάτερ,
παρασταθήτω· τῶν γὰρ ἡμαρτημένων
ἄκη μὲν ἔστι, προσφορὰ δ’ οὐκ ἔστ’ ἔτι.
Τί σιγᾷς;
Φώνησον, ὦ πάτερ, τι· μή μ’ ἀποστραφῇς·
οὐδ’ ἀνταμείβῃ μ’ οὐδέν, ἀλλ’ ἀτιμάσας
πέμψεις ἄναυδος, οὐδ’ ἃ μηνίεις φράσας;
Ὦ σπέρματ’ ἀνδρὸς τοῦδ’, ἐμαὶ δ’ ὁμαίμονες,
πειράσατ’ ἀλλ’ ὑμεῖς γε κινῆσαι πατρὸς
τὸ δυσπρόσοιστον κἀπροσήγορον στόμα,
ὡς μή μ’ ἄτιμον, τοῦ θεοῦ γε προστάτην,

οὕτως ἀφῇ με μηδὲν ἀντειπὼν ἔπος.
ΑΝ. Λέγ’, ὦ ταλαίπωρ’, αὐτὸς ὢν χρείᾳ πάρει·
τὰ πολλὰ γάρ τοι ῥήματ’ ἢ τέρψαντά τι
ἢ δυσχεράναντ’ ἢ κατοικτίσαντά πως
παρέσχε φωνὴν τοῖς ἀφωνήτοις τινά.

ΠΟ. Ἀλλ’ ἐξερῶ· καλῶς γὰρ ἐξηγῇ σύ μοι·
πρῶτον μὲν αὐτὸν τὸν θεὸν ποιούμενος
ἀρωγόν, ἔνθεν μ’ ὧδ’ ἀνέστησεν μολεῖν
ὁ τῆσδε τῆς γῆς κοίρανος, διδοὺς ἐμοὶ
λέξαι τ’ ἀκοῦσαί τ’ ἀσφαλεῖ σὺν ἐξόδῳ.
Καὶ ταῦτ’ ἀφ’ ὑμῶν, ὦ ξένοι, βουλήσομαι
καὶ ταῖνδ’ ἀδελφαῖν καὶ πατρὸς κυρεῖν ἐμοί·
ἃ δ’ ἦλθον ἤδη σοι θέλω λέξαι, πάτερ.
Γῆς ἐκ πατρῴας ἐξελήλαμαι φυγάς,
τοῖς σοῖς πανάρχοις οὕνεκ’ ἐνθακεῖν θρόνοις
γονῇ πεφυκὼς ἠξίουν γεραιτέρᾳ.
Ἀνθ’ ὧν μ’ Ἐτεοκλῆς, ὢν φύσει νεώτερος,
γῆς ἐξέωσεν, οὔτε νικήσας λόγῳ,
οὔτ’ εἰς ἔλεγχον χειρὸς οὐδ’ ἔργου μολών,
πόλιν δὲ πείσας· ὧν ἐγὼ μάλιστα μὲν
τὴν σὴν Ἐρινὺν αἰτίαν εἶναι λέγω·
ἔπειτα κἀπὸ μάντεων ταύτῃ κλύω.
Ἐπεὶ γὰρ ἦλθον Ἄργος ἐς τὸ Δωρικόν,
λαβὼν Ἄδραστον πενθερόν, ξυνωμότας
ἔστησ’ ἐμαυτῷ γῆς ὅσοιπερ Ἀπίας
πρῶτοι καλοῦνται καὶ τετίμηνται δορί,
ὅπως τὸν ἑπτάλογχον ἐς Θήβας στόλον
ξὺν τοῖσδ’ ἀγείρας ἢ θάνοιμι πανδίκως
ἢ τοὺς τάδ’ ἐκπράξαντας ἐκβάλοιμι γῆς.
Εἶεν· τί δῆτα νῦν ἀφιγμένος κυρῶ;
σοὶ προστροπαίους, ὦ πάτερ, λιτὰς ἔχων
αὐτός τ’ ἐμαυτοῦ ξυμμάχων τε τῶν ἐμῶν,
οἳ νῦν σὺν ἑπτὰ τάξεσιν σὺν ἑπτά τε
λόγχαις τὸ Θήβης πεδίον ἀμφεστᾶσι πᾶν·
οἷος δορυσσοῦς Ἀμφιάρεως, τὰ πρῶτα μὲν

δόρει κρατύνων, πρῶτα δ’ οἰωνῶν ὁδοῖς·
ὁ δεύτερος δ’ Αἰτωλός, Οἰνέως τόκος,
Τυδεύς· τρίτος δ’ Ἐτέοκλος, Ἀργεῖος γεγώς·
τέταρτον Ἱππομέδοντ’ ἀπέστειλεν πατὴρ
Ταλαός· ὁ πέμπτος δ’ εὔχεται κατασκαφῇ
Καπανεὺς τὸ Θήβης ἄστυ δῃώσειν πυρί·
ἕκτος δὲ Παρθενοπαῖος Ἀρκὰς ὄρνυται,
ἐπώνυμος τῆς πρόσθεν ἀδμήτης χρόνῳ
μητρὸς λοχευθείς, πιστὸς Ἀταλάντης γόνος·
ἐγὼ δὲ σός, κεἰ μὴ σός, ἀλλὰ τοῦ κακοῦ
πότμου φυτευθείς, σός γέ τοι καλούμενος,
ἄγω τὸν Ἄργους ἄφοβον ἐς Θήβας στρατόν.
Οἵ σ’ ἀντὶ παίδων τῶνδε καὶ ψυχῆς, πάτερ,
ἱκετεύομεν ξύμπαντες, ἐξαιτούμενοι
μῆνιν βαρεῖαν εἰκαθεῖν ὀρμωμένῳ
τῷδ’ ἀνδρὶ τοὐμοῦ πρὸς κασιγνήτου τίσιν,
ὅς μ’ ἐξέωσεν κἀπεσύλησεν πάτρας.
Εἰ γάρ τι πιστόν ἐστιν ἐκ χρηστηρίων,
οἷς ἂν σὺ προσθῇ, τοῖσδ’ ἔφασκ’ εἶναι κράτος.
Πρός νύν σε κρηνῶν, πρὸς θεῶν ὁμογνίων
αἰτῶ πιθέσθαι καὶ παρεικαθεῖν, ἐπεὶ
πτωχοὶ μὲν ἡμεῖς καὶ ξένοι, ξένος δὲ σύ·
ἄλλους δὲ θωπεύοντες οἰκοῦμεν σύ τε
κἀγώ, τὸν αὐτὸν δαίμον’ ἐξειληχότες.
Ὁ δ’ ἐν δόμοις τύραννος, ὢ τάλας ἐγώ,
κοινῇ καθ’ ἡμῶν ἐγγελῶν ἀβρύνεται·
ὅν, εἰ σὺ τἠμῇ ξυμπαραστήσῃ φρενί,
βραχεῖ σὺν ὄγκῳ καὶ χρόνῳ διασκεδῶ.
Ὥστ’ ἐν δόμοισι τοῖσι σοῖς στήσω σ’ ἄγων,
στήσω δ’ ἐμαυτόν, κεῖνον ἐκβαλὼν βίᾳ.
Καὶ ταῦτα σοῦ μὲν ξυνθέλοντος ἔστι μοι
κομπεῖν, ἄνευ σοῦ δ’ οὐδὲ σωθῆναι σθένω.

ΧΟ. Τὸν ἄνδρα, τοῦ πέμψαντος οὕνεκ’, Οἰδίπους,
εἰπὼν ὁποῖα ξύμφορ’ ἔκπεμψαι πάλιν.

ΟΙ. Ἀλλ’ εἰ μέν, ἄνδρες τῆσδε δημοῦχοι χθονός,
μὴ ‘τύγχαν’ αὐτὸν δεῦρο προσπέμψας ἐμοὶ
Θησεύς, δικαιῶν ὥστ’ ἐμοῦ κλύειν λόγους,
οὔ τἄν ποτ’ ὀμφῆς τῆς ἐμῆς ἐπῄσθετο·
νῦν δ’ ἀξιωθεὶς εἶσι κἀκούσας γ’ ἐμοῦ
τοιαῦθ’ ἃ τὸν τοῦδ’ οὔποτ’ εὐφρανεῖ βίον·
ὅς γ’, ὦ κάκιστε, σκῆπτρα καὶ θρόνους ἔχων,
ἃ νῦν ὁ σὸς ξύναιμος ἐν Θήβαις ἔχει,
τὸν αὐτὸς αὐτοῦ πατέρα τόνδ’ ἀπήλασας,
κἄθηκας ἄπολιν καὶ στολὰς ταύτας φορεῖν,
ἃς νῦν δακρύεις εἰσορῶν, ὅτ’ ἐν πόνῳ
ταὐτῷ βεβηκὼς τυγχάνεις ἄκων ἐμοί.
Οὐ κλαυστὰ δ’ ἐστίν, ἀλλ’ ἐμοὶ μὲν οἰστέα
τάδ’, ἔωσπερ ἂν ζῶ, σοῦ φονέως μεμνημένος·
σὺ γάρ με μόχθῳ τῷδ’ ἔθηκας ἔντροφον,
σύ μ’ ἐξέωσας, ἐκ σέθεν δ’ ἀλώμενος
ἄλλους ἐπαιτῶ τὸν καθ’ ἡμέραν βίον.
Εἰ δ’ ἐξέφυσα τάσδε μὴ ‘μαυτῷ τροφοὺς
τὰς παῖδας, ἦ τἂν οὐκ ἂν ἦ, τὸ σὸν μέρος·
νῦν δ’ αἵδε μ’ ἐκσῴζουσιν, αἵδ’ ἐμαὶ τροφοί,
αἵδ’ ἄνδρες, οὐ γυναῖκες, εἰς τὸ συμπονεῖν·
ὑμεῖς δ’ ἀπ’ ἄλλου κοὐκ ἐμοῦ πεφύκατον.
Τοιγάρ σ’ ὁ δαίμων εἰσορᾷ μέν, - οὔ τί πω
ὡς αὐτίκ’, εἴπερ οἵδε κινοῦνται λόχοι
πρὸς ἄστυ Θήβης. Οὐ γὰρ ἔσθ’ ὅπως πόλιν
κείνην ἐρείψεις, ἀλλὰ πρόσθεν αἵματι
πεσῇ μιανθεὶς χὠ ξύναιμος ἐξ ἴσου.
Τοιάσδ’ Ἀρὰς σφῷν πρόσθε τ’ ἐξανῆκ’ ἐγώ,
νῦν τ’ ἀνακαλοῦμαι ξυμμάχους ἐλθεῖν ἐμοί,
ἵν’ ἀξιῶτον τοὺς φυτεύσαντας σέβειν,
καὶ μὴ ‘ξατιμάζητον, εἰ τυφλοῦ πατρὸς
τοιώδ’ ἔφυτον· αἵδε γὰρ τάδ’ οὐκ ἔδρων.
Τοιγὰρ τὸ σὸν θάκημα καὶ τοὺς σοὺς θρόνους
κρατοῦσιν, εἴπερ ἐστὶν ἡ παλαίφατος
Δίκη ξύνεδρος Ζηνὸς ἀρχαίοις νόμοις.
Σὺ δ’ ἔρρ’ ἀπόπτυστός τε κἀπάτωρ ἐμοῦ,
κακῶν κάκιστε, τάσδε συλλαβὼν Ἀράς,
ἃς σοι καλοῦμαι, μήτε γῆς ἐμφυλίου

δόρει κρατῆσαι μήτε νοστῆσαί ποτε
τὸ κοῖλον Ἄργος, ἀλλὰ συγγενεῖ χερὶ
θανεῖν κτανεῖν θ’ ὑφ’ οὗπερ ἐξελήλασαι.
Τοιαῦτ’ ἀρῶμαι, καὶ καλῶ τοῦ Ταρτάρου
1390 στυγνὸν τὸ πρῶτον ἔρεβος, ὥς σ’ ἀποικίσῃ,
καλῶ δὲ τάσδε δαίμονας, καλῶ δ’ Ἄρη
τὸν σφῷν τὸ δεινὸν μῖσος ἐμβεβληκότα.
Καὶ ταῦτ’ ἀκούσας στεῖχε κἀξάγγελλ’ ἰὼν
καὶ πᾶσι Καδμείοισι τοῖς σαυτοῦ θ’ ἅμα
1395 πιστοῖσι συμμάχοισιν, οὕνεκ’ Οἰδίπους
τοιαῦτ’ ἔνειμε παισὶ τοῖς αὐτοῦ γέρα.

ΧΟ. Πολύνεικες, οὔτε ταῖς παρελθούσαις ὁδοῖς
ξυνήδομαί σοι, νῦν τ’ ἴθ’ ὡς τάχος πάλιν.

ΠΟ. Οἴμοι κελεύθου τῆς τ’ ἐμῆς δυσπραξίας,
1400 οἴμοι δ’ ἑταίρων· οἷον ἀρ’ ὁδοῦ τέλος
Ἄργους ἀφωρμήθημεν, ὦ τάλας ἐγώ,
τοιοῦτον οἷον οὐδὲ φωνῆσαί τινι
ἔξεσθ’ ἑταίρων, οὐδ’ ἀποστρέψαι πάλιν,
ἀλλ’ ὄντ’ ἄναυδον τῇδε συγκῦρσαι τύχῃ.
1405 Ὦ τοῦδ’ ὄμαιμοι παῖδες, ἀλλ’ ὑμεῖς, ἐπεὶ
τὰ σκληρὰ πατρὸς κλύετε τοῦδ’ ἀρωμένου,
μή τοί με πρὸς θεῶν σφώ γ’, ἐὰν αἰ τοῦδ’ ἀραὶ
πατρὸς τελῶνται καί τις ὑμὶν ἐς δόμους
νόστος γένηται, μή μ’ ἀτιμάσητέ γε,
1410 ἀλλ’ ἐν τάφοισι θέσθε κἀν κτερίσμασιν.
Καὶ σφῷν ὁ νῦν ἔπαινος, ὃν κομίζετον
τοῦδ’ ἀνδρὸς οἷς πονεῖτον, οὐκ ἐλάσσονα
ἔτ’ ἄλλον οἴσει τῆς ἐμῆς ὑπουργίας.

ΑΝ. Πολύνεικες, ἱκετεύω σε πεισθῆναί τί μοι.

1415 ΠΟ. Ὦ φιλτάτη, τὸ ποῖον, Ἀντιγόνη; λέγε.

ΑΝ. Στρέψαι στράτευμ’ ἐς Ἄργος ὡς τάχιστά γε,
καὶ μὴ σέ τ’ αὐτὸν καὶ πόλιν διεργάσῃ.

ΠΟ. Ἀλλ’ οὐχ οἷόν τε· πῶς γὰρ αὖθις ἂν πάλιν
στράτευμ’ ἄγοιμι ταὐτὸν εἰσάπαξ τρέσας;
1420 ΑΝ. Τί δ’ αὖθις, ὦ παῖ, δεῖ σε θυμοῦσθαι; τί σοι
πάτραν κατασκάψαντι κέρδος ἔρχεται;

ΠΟ. Αἰσχρὸν τὸ φεύγειν καὶ τὸ πρεσβεύοντ’ ἐμὲ
οὕτω γελᾶσθαι τοῦ κασιγνήτου πάρα.

ΑΝ. Ὁρᾷς τὰ τοῦδ’ οὖν ὥς ‹σ’› ἐς ὀρθὸν ἐκφέρει
1425 μαντεύμαθ’ ὃς σφῷν θάνατον ἐξ ἀμφοῖν θροεῖ;

ΠΟ. Χρῄζει γάρ· ἡμῖν δ’ οὐχὶ συγχωρητέα.

ΑΝ. Οἴμοι τάλαινα· τίς δὲ τολμήσει κλύων
τὰ τοῦδ’ ἔπεσθαι τἀνδρός, οἳ’ ἐθέσπισεν;

ΠΟ. Οὐδ’ ἀγγελοῦμεν φλαῦρ’· ἐπεὶ στρατηλάτου

χρηστοῦ τὰ κρείσσω μηδὲ τἀνδεᾶ λέγειν.

ΑΝ. Οὕτως ἄρ’, ὦ παῖ, ταῦτά σοι δεδογμένα;

ΠΟ. Καὶ μή μ’ ἐπίσχῃς γ’· ἀλλ’ ἐμοὶ μὲν ἥδ’ ὁδὸς
ἔσται μέλουσα δύσποτμός τε καὶ κακὴ
πρὸς τοῦδε πατρὸς τῶν τε τοῦδ’ Ἐρινύων.
Σφῷν δ’ εὐοδοίη Ζεύς, τάδ’ εἰ θανόντι μοι
τελεῖτ’, ἐπεὶ οὔ μοι ζῶντί γ’ αὖθις ἔξετον.
Μέθεσθε δ’ ἤδη, χαίρετόν τ’· οὐ γάρ μ’ ἔτι
βλέποντ’ ἐσόψεσθ’ αὖθις.

ΑΝ. Ὦ τάλαιν’ ἐγώ.

ΠΟ. Μή τοί μ’ ὀδύρου.

ΑΝ. Καὶ τίς ἄν σ’ ὁρμώμενον
εἰς προὔπτον Ἅιδην οὐ καταστένοι, κάσι;

ΠΟ. Εἰ χρή, θανοῦμαι.

ΑΝ. Μὴ σύ γ’, ἀλλ’ ἐμοὶ πιθοῦ.

ΠΟ. Μὴ πεῖθ’ ἃ μὴ δεῖ.

ΑΝ. Δυστάλαινά τἄρ’ ἐγώ,
εἴ σου στερηθῶ.

ΠΟ. Ταῦτα δ’ ἐν τῷ δαίμονι
καὶ τῇδε φῦναι χἀτέρᾳ. Σφῷν δ’ οὖν ἐγὼ
1445 θεοῖς ἀρῶμαι μή ποτ’ ἀντῆσαι κακῶν·
ἀνάξιαι γὰρ πᾶσίν ἐστε δυστυχεῖν.

ΧΟ. Νέα τάδε νεόθεν ἦλθέ μοι Str. 1 .
βαρύποτμά ‹τινα› κακὰ παρ’ ἀλαοῦ ξένου,
1450 εἴ τι μοῖρα μὴ κιγχάνει.
Ματᾶν γὰρ οὐδὲν ἀξίω-
μα δαιμόνων ἔχω φράσαι.
Ὁρᾷ, ὁρᾷ ταῦτ’ ἀεὶ
Χρόνος, ἐπ’ ‹ἔτ›ει μὲν ἕτερα,
1455 τὰ δὲ π‹αρ›’ ἦμαρ αὖθις αὔξων ἄνω.
Ἔκτυπεν αἰθήρ, ὦ Ζεῦ.

ΟΙ. Ὦ τέκνα, τέκνα, πῶς ἄν, εἴ τις ἔντοπος,
τὸν πάντ’ ἄριστον δεῦρο Θησέα πόροι;

ΑΝ. Πάτερ, τί δ’ ἐστὶ τἀξίωμ’ ἐφ’ ᾧ καλεῖς;

ΟΙ. Διὸς πτερωτὸς ἥδε μ’ αὐτίκ’ ἄξεται
βροντὴ πρὸς Ἅιδην· ἀλλὰ πέμψαθ’ ὡς τάχος.

ΧΟ. Ἴδε μάλα μέγας ἐρείπεται Ant. 1 .
κτύπος ἄφατος ὅδε διόβολος· ἐς δ’ ἄκραν
δεῖμ’ ὑπῆλθε κρατὸς φόβαν.
Ἔπτηξα θυμόν· οὐράνια
γὰρ ἀστραπὰ φλέγει πάλιν.
Τί μὰν ἀφήσει τέλος;
δέδια τόδ’· οὐ γὰρ ἄλιον
ἀφορμᾷ ποτ’, οὐκ ἄνευ ξυμφορᾶς.
Ὦ μέγας αἰθήρ, ὦ Ζεῦ.

ΟΙ. Ὦ παῖδες, ἥκει τῷδ’ ἐπ’ ἀνδρὶ θέσφατος
βίου τελευτή, κοὐκέτ’ ἔστ’ ἀποστροφή.

ΑΝ. Πῶς οἶσθα; τῷ δὲ τοῦτο συμβαλὼν ἔχεις;
ΟΙ. Καλῶς κάτοιδ’· ἀλλ’ ὡς τάχιστά μοι μολὼν
ἄνακτα χώρας τῆσδέ τις πορευσάτω.

ΧΟ. Ἔα ἔα, ἰδοὺ μάλ’ αὖθις ἀμφίσταται Str. 2 .
διαπρύσιος ὄτοβος.
Ἴλαος, ὦ δαίμων, ἵλαος, εἴ τι γᾷ
ματέρι τυγχάνεις ἀφεγγὲς φέρων.
Ἐναισίου δὲ σοῦ τύχοι-
μι, μηδ’ ἄλαστον ἄνδρ’ ἰδὼν
ἀκερδῆ χάριν μετάσχοιμί πως·
Ζεῦ ἄνα, σοὶ φωνῶ.

ΟΙ. Ἆρ’ ἐγγὺς ἀνήρ; ἆρ’ ἔτ’ ἐμψύχου, τέκνα,
κιχήσεταί μου καὶ κατορθοῦντος φρένα;

ΑΝ. Τί δ’ ἂν θέλοις τὸ πιστὸν ἐμφῦσαι φρενί;

ΟΙ. Ἀνθ’ ὧν ἔπασχον εὖ, τελεσφόρον χάριν
1490 δοῦναί σφιν ἥνπερ τυγχάνων ὑπεσχόμην.

ΧΟ. Ἰὼ ‹ἰώ›, παῖ, βᾶθι, βᾶθ’, ⏑ – ⏑ – Ant. 2 .
εἴτ’ ἄκρον ἐπὶ γύαλον
ἐναλίῳ Ποσειδαονίῳ θεῷ
1495 βούθυτον ἑστίαν ἀγίζων, ἱκοῦ.
Ὁ γὰρ ξένος σε καὶ πόλισ-
μα καὶ φίλους ἐπαξιοῖ
δικαίαν χάριν παρασχεῖν παθών.
‹Σπεῦσον›, ἄϊσσ’, ὦναξ.
1500 ΘΗ. Τίς αὖ παρ’ ὑμῶν κοινὸς ἠχεῖται κτύπος
σαφὴς μὲν αὐτῶν, ἐμφανὴς δὲ τοῦ ξένου;
μή τις Διὸς κεραυνός, ἤ τις ὀμβρία
χάλαζ’ ἐπιρράξασα; πάντα γὰρ θεοῦ
τοιαῦτα χειμάζοντος εἰκάσαι πάρα.
1505 ΟΙ. Ἄναξ, ποθοῦντι προὐφάνης, καί σοι θεῶν
τύχην τις ἐσθλὴν τῆσδ’ ἔθηκε τῆς ὁδοῦ.

ΘΗ. Τί δ’ ἐστίν, ὦ παῖ Λαΐου, νέορτον αὖ;

ΟΙ. Ὀρπὴ βίου μοι· καί σ’ ἅπερ ξυνῆνεσα
θέλω πόλιν τε τήνδε μὴ ψεύσας θανεῖν.
1510 ΘΗ. Ἐν τῷ δὲ κεῖσαι τοῦ μόρου τεκμηρίῳ;

ΟΙ. Αὐτοὶ θεοὶ κήρυκες ἀγγέλλουσί μοι,
ψεύδοντες οὐδὲν σημάτων προκειμένων.

ΘΗ. Πῶς εἶπας, ὦ γεραιέ, δηλοῦσθαι τάδε;

ΟΙ. Αἱ πολλὰ βρονταὶ διατελεῖς τὰ πολλά τε
1515 στράψαντα χειρὸς τῆς ἀνικήτου βέλη.

ΘΗ. Πείθεις με· πολλὰ γάρ σε θεσπίζονθ’ ὁρῶ
κοὐ ψευδόφημα· χὤ τι χρὴ ποεῖν λέγε.

ΟΙ. Ἐγὼ διδάξω, τέκνον Αἰγέως, ἃ σοὶ
γήρως ἄλυπα σῇ τε κείσεται πόλει.
1520 Χῶρον μὲν αὐτὸς αὐτίκ’ ἐξηγήσομαι,
ἄθικτος ἡγητῆρος, οὗ με χρὴ θανεῖν.
Τοῦτον δὲ φράζε μή ποτ’ ἀνθρώπων τινὶ
μήθ’ οὗ κέκευθε μήτ’ ἐν οἷς κεῖται τόποις,
ὡς σοι πρὸ πολλῶν ἀσπίδων ἀλκὴν ὅδε
1525 δορός τ’ ἐπακτοῦ γειτόνων ἀεὶ τιθῇ.
Ἃ δ’ ἐξάγιστα μηδὲ κινεῖται λόγῳ
αὐτὸς μαθήσῃ, κεῖσ’ ὅταν μόλῃς, μόνος·
ὡς οὔτ’ ἂν ἀστῶν τῶνδ’ ἂν ἐξείποιμί τῳ,
οὔτ’ ἂν τέκνοισι τοῖς ἐμοῖς στέργων ὅμως.

Ἀλλ’ αὐτὸς αἰεὶ σῷζε, χὥταν εἰς τέλος
τοῦ ζῆν ἀφικνῇ, τῷ προφερτάτῳ μόνῳ
σήμαιν’, ὃ δ’ αἰεὶ τὠπιόντι δεικνύτω.
Χοὕτως ἀδῇον τήνδ’ ἐνοικήσεις πόλιν
σπαρτῶν ἀπ’ ἀνδρῶν· αἱ δὲ μυρίαι πόλεις,
κἂν εὖ τις οἰκῇ, ῥᾳδίως καθύβρισαν·
θεοὶ γὰρ εὖ μέν, ὀψὲ δ’ εἰσορῶσ’, ὅταν
τὰ θεῖ’ ἀφείς τις εἰς τὸ μαίνεσθαι τραπῇ·
ὃ μὴ σύ, τέκνον Αἰγέως, βούλου παθεῖν.
Τὰ μὲν τοιαῦτ’ οὖν εἰδότ’ ἐκδιδάσκομεν.
Χῶρον δ’, ἐπείγει γάρ με τοὐκ θεοῦ παρόν,
στείχωμεν ἤδη, μηδ’ ἔτ’ ἐντρεπώμεθα.
Ὦ παῖδες, ὧδ’ ἕπεσθ’· ἐγὼ γὰρ ἡγεμὼν
σφῷν αὖ πέφασμαι καινός, ὥσπερ σφὼ πατρί.
Χωρεῖτε, καὶ μὴ ψαύετ’, ἀλλ’ ἐᾶτέ με
αὐτὸν τὸν ἱερὸν τύμβον ἐξευρεῖν ἵνα
μοῖρ’ ἀνδρὶ τῷδε τῇδε κρυφθῆναι χθονί.
Τῇδ’, ὧδε, τῇδε βᾶτε· τῇδε γάρ μ’ ἄγει
Ἑρμῆς ὁ πομπὸς ἥ τε νερτέρα θεός.
Ὦ φῶς ἀφεγγές, πρόσθε πού ποτ’ ἦσθ’ ἐμόν,
νῦν δ’ ἔσχατόν σου τοὐμὸν ἅπτεται δέμας·
ἤδη γὰρ ἕρπω τὸν τελευταῖον βίον
κρύψων παρ’ Ἅιδην. Ἀλλά, φίλτατε ξένων,
αὐτός τε χώρα θ’ ἥδε πρόσπολοί τε σοὶ
εὐδαίμονες γένοισθε, κἀπ’ εὐπραξίᾳ
μέμνησθέ μου θανόντος εὐτυχεῖς ἀεί.

ΧΟ. Εἰ θέμις ἐστί μοι τὰν ἀφανῆ θεὸν Str.
καὶ σὲ λιταῖς σεβίζειν,
ἐννυχίων ἄναξ,
Αἰδωνεῦ Αἰδωνεῦ, λίσσομαι
μὴ ‘πιπόνῳ μήτ’ ἐπὶ βαρυαχεῖ
ξένον ἐξανύσαι
μόρῳ τὰν παγκευ-
θῆ κάτω νεκρῶν πλάκα
καὶ Στύγιον δόμον.

Πολλῶν γὰρ ἂν καὶ μάταν
πημάτων ἱκνουμένων
πάλιν σφε δαίμων δίκαιος αὖξοι.
Ὦ χθόνιαι θεαὶ σῶμά τ’ ἀνικάτου Ant.
θηρὸς ὃν ἐν πύλαισι
‹ταῖσδε› πολυξένοις
εὐνᾶσθαι κνυζεῖσθαί τ’ ἐξ ἄντρων
ἀδάματον φύλακα παρ’ Ἄϊδᾳ
λόγος αἰὲν ἔχει·
ὃν, ὦ Γᾶς παῖ καὶ
Ταρτάρου, κατεύχομαι,
ἐν καθαρῷ βῆναι
ὁρμωμένῳ νερτέρας
τῷ ξένῳ νεκρῶν πλάκας·
σέ τοι κικλήσκω τὸν αἰένυπνον.

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ
Ἄνδρες πολῖται, ξυντομωτάτως μὲν ἂν
τύχοιμι λέξας Οἰδίπουν ὀλωλότα·
ἃ δ’ ἦν τὰ πραχθέντ’ οὔθ’ ὁ μῦθος ἐν βραχεῖ
φράσαι πάρεστιν, οὔτε τἄργ’ ὅσ’ ἦν ἐκεῖ.

ΧΟ. Ὤλωλε γὰρ δύστηνος;

ΑΓ. Ὡς λελογχότα
κεῖνον τὸν αἰεὶ βίοτον ἐξεπίστασο.
ΧΟ. Πῶς; ἆρα θείᾳ κἀπόνῳ τάλας τύχῃ;

ΑΓ. Τοῦτ’ ἐστὶν ἤδη κἀποθαυμάσαι πρέπον.

Ὡς μὲν γὰρ ἐνθένδ’ εἶρπε, καὶ σύ που παρὼν
ἔξοισθ’, ὑφηγητῆρος οὐδενὸς φίλων,
ἀλλ’ αὐτὸς ἡμῖν πᾶσιν ἐξηγούμενος·
ἐπεὶ δ’ ἀφῖκτο τὸν καταρράκτην ὀδὸν
χαλκοῖς βάθροισι γῆθεν ἐρριζωμένον,
ἔστη κελεύθων ἐν πολυσχίστων μιᾷ,
κοίλου πέλας κρατῆρος, οὗ τὰ Θησέως
Περίθου τε κεῖται πίστ’ ἀεὶ ξυνθήματα·
ἀφ’ οὗ μέσος στὰς τοῦ τε Θορικίου πέτρου
κοίλης τ’ ἀχέρδου κἀπὸ λαΐνου τάφου,
καθέζετ’· εἶτ’ ἔλυσε δυσπινεῖς στολάς,
κἄπειτ’ ἀΰσας παῖδας ἠνώγει ῥυτῶν
ὑδάτων ἐνεγκεῖν λουτρὰ καὶ χοάς ποθεν.
Τὼ δ’, εὐχλόου Δήμητρος εἰς προσόψιον
πάγον μολοῦσαι, τάσδ’ ἐπιστολὰς πατρὶ
ταχεῖ ‘πόρευσαν σὺν χρόνῳ λουτροῖς τέ νιν
ἐσθῆτί τ’ ἐξήσκησαν ᾗ νομίζεται.
Ἐπεὶ δὲ παντὸς εἶχε δρῶντος ἡδονὴν
κοὐκ ἦν ἔτ’ ἀργὸν οὐδὲν ὧν ἐφίετο,
κτύπησε μὲν Ζεὺς Χθόνιος, αἱ δὲ παρθένοι
ῥίγησαν, ὡς ἤκουσαν· ἐς δὲ γούνατα
πατρὸς πεσοῦσαι κλαῖον, οὐδ’ ἀνίεσαν
στέρνων ἀραγμοὺς οὐδὲ παμμήκεις γόους.
Ὁ δ’ ὡς ἀκούει φθόγγον ἐξαίφνης πικρόν,
πτύξας ἐπ’ αὐταῖς χεῖρας εἶπεν· “Ὦ τέκνα,
οὐκ ἔστ’ ἔθ’ ὑμῖν τῇδ’ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ πατήρ.
Ὄλωλε γὰρ δὴ πάντα τἀμὰ κοὐκέτι
τὴν δυσπόνητον ἕξετ’ ἀμφ’ ἐμοὶ τροφήν·
σκληρὰν μέν, οἶδα, παῖδες· ἀλλ’ ἓν γὰρ μόνον
τὰ πάντα λύει ταῦτ’ ἔπος μοχθήματα·
τὸ γὰρ φιλεῖν οὐκ ἔστιν ἐξ ὅτου πλέον
ἢ τοῦδε τἀνδρὸς ἔσχεθ’, οὗ τητώμεναι
τὸ λοιπὸν ἤδη τοῦ βίου διάξετον.”
Τοιαῦτ’ ἐπ’ ἀλλήλοισιν ἀμφικείμενοι
λύγδην ἔκλαιον πάντες· ὡς δὲ πρὸς τέλος
γόων ἀφίκοντ’ οὐδ’ ἔτ’ ὠρώρει βοή,
ἦν μὲν σιωπή, φθέγμα δ’ ἐξαίφνης τινὸς
θώϋξεν αὐτόν, ὥστε πάντας ὀρθίας

στῆσαι φόβῳ δείσαντας ἐξαίφνης τρίχας.
Καλεῖ γὰρ αὐτὸν πολλὰ πολλαχῇ θεός·
“Ὦ οὗτος οὗτος, Οἰδίπους, τί μέλλομεν
χωρεῖν; πάλαι δὴ τἀπὸ σοῦ βραδύνεται.”
Ὁ δ’ ὡς ἐπῄσθετ’ ἐκ θεοῦ καλούμενος,
αὐδᾷ μολεῖν οἱ γῆς ἄνακτα Θησέα·
κἀπεὶ προσῆλθεν, εἶπεν· “Ὦ φίλον κάρα,
δός μοι χερὸς σῆς πίστιν ἀρχαίαν τέκνοις,
ὑμεῖς τε, παῖδες, τῷδε· καὶ καταίνεσον
μήποτε προδώσειν τάσδ’ ἐκών, τελεῖν δ’ ὅσ’ ἂν
μέλλῃς φρονῶν εὖ ξυμφέροντ’ αὐταῖς ἀεί.”
Ὁ δ’, ὡς ἀνὴρ γενναῖος, οὐκ οἴκτου μέτα
κατῄνεσεν τάδ’ ὅρκιος δράσειν ξένῳ.
Ὅπως δὲ ταῦτ’ ἔδρασεν, εὐθὺς Οἰδίπους
ψαύσας ἀμαυραῖς χερσὶν ὧν παίδων λέγει·
“Ὦ παῖδε, τλάσας χρὴ τὸ γενναῖον φρενὶ
χωρεῖν τόπων ἐκ τῶνδε, μηδ’ ἃ μὴ θέμις
λεύσσειν δικαιοῦν, μηδὲ φωνούντων κλύειν.
Ἀλλ’ ἕρπεθ’ ὡς τάχιστα· πλὴν ὁ κύριος
Θησεὺς παρέστω μανθάνων τὰ δρώμενα.”
Τοσαῦτα φωνήσαντος εἰσηκούσαμεν
ξύμπαντες· ἀστακτὶ δὲ σὺν ταῖς παρθένοις
στένοντες ὠμαρτοῦμεν· ὡς δ’ ἀπήλθομεν,
χρόνῳ βραχεῖ στραφέντες, ἐξαπείδομεν
τὸν ἄνδρα τὸν μὲν οὐδαμοῦ παρόντ’ ἔτι,
ἄνακτα δ’ αὐτὸν ὀμμάτων ἐπίσκιον
χεῖρ’ ἀντέχοντα κρατός, ὡς δεινοῦ τινος
φόβου φανέντος οὐδ’ ἀνασχετοῦ βλέπειν.
Ἔπειτα μέντοι βαιὸν οὐδὲ σὺν χρόνῳ
ὁρῶμεν αὐτὸν Γῆν τε προσκυνοῦνθ’ ἅμα
καὶ τὸν θεῶν Ὄλυμπον ἐν ταὐτῷ λόγῳ.
Μόρῳ δ’ ὁποίῳ κεῖνος ὤλετ’ οὐδ’ ἂν εἷς
θνητῶν φράσειε, πλὴν τὸ Θησέως κάρα·
οὐ γάρ τις αὐτὸν οὔτε πυρφόρος θεοῦ
κεραυνὸς ἐξέπραξεν οὔτε ποντία
θύελλα κινηθεῖσα τῷ τότ’ ἐν χρόνῳ,
ἀλλ’ ἤ τις ἐκ θεῶν πομπός, ἢ τὸ νερτέρων
εὔνουν διαστὰν γῆς ἀλάμπετον βάθρον.
Ἀνὴρ γὰρ οὐ στενακτὸς οὐδὲ σὺν νόσοις

ἀλγεινὸς ἐξεπέμπετ’, ἀλλ’ εἴ τις βροτῶν
θαυμαστός. Εἰ δὲ μὴ δοκῶ φρονῶν λέγειν,
οὐκ ἂν παρείμην οἶσι μὴ δοκῶ φρονεῖν.

ΧΟ. Ποῦ δ’ αἵ τε παῖδες χοἱ προπέμψαντες φίλων;

ΑΓ. Αἵδ’ οὐχ ἑκάς· γόων γὰρ οὐκ ἀσήμονες
φθόγγοι σφε σημαίνουσι δεῦρ’ ὁρμωμένας.
ΑΝ. Αἰαῖ, φεῦ, ἔστιν ἔστι νῷν δὴ Str. 1 .
οὐ τὸ μέν, ἄλλο δὲ μή, πατρὸς ἔμφυτον
ἄλαστον αἷμα δυσμόροιν στενάζειν,
ᾧ τινι τὸν πολὺν
ἄλλοτε μὲν πόνον ἔμπεδον εἴχομεν,
ἐν πυμάτῳ δ’ ἀλόγιστα παροίσομεν
ἰδόντε καὶ παθούσα.

ΧΟ. Τί δ’ ἔστιν;

ΑΝ. Ἔστιν μὲν εἰκάσαι, φίλοι.

ΧΟ. Βέβηκεν;

ΑΝ. Ὡς μάλιστ’ ἂν ἐν πόθῳ λάβοις.
Τί γάρ; ὅτῳ μήτ’ Ἄρης
μήτε πόντος ἀντέκυρσεν,

ἄσκοποι δὲ πλάκες ἔμαρψαν
ἐν ἀφανεῖ τινι μόρῳ
φερόμενον· τάλαινα, νῷν δ’ ὀλεθρία
νὺξ ἐπ’ ὄμμασιν βέβακε·
1685 πῶς γὰρ ἤ τιν’ ἀπίαν
γᾶν ἢ πόντιον κλύ-
δων’ ἀλώμεναι βίου δύσ-
οιστον ἔξομεν τροφάν;

ΙΣ. Οὐ κάτοιδα. Κατά με φόνιος
Ἀΐδας ἕλοι πατρὶ
1690 ξυνθανεῖν γεραιῷ
τάλαιναν, ὡς ἔμοιγ’ ὁ μέλ-
λων βίος οὐ βιωτός.

ΧΟ. Ὦ διδύμα τέκνων ἀρίστα, τὸ φέρον καλῶς φέρειν,
1695 μηδ‹έ γ’› ἄγαν φλέγεσθον; οὔ
τοι κατάμεμπτ’ ἔβητον.

ΑΝ. Πόθος ‹τοι› καὶ κακῶν ἄρ’ ἦν τις· Ant. 1 .
καὶ γὰρ ὃ μηδαμὰ δὴ τὸ φίλον, φίλον,
ὁπότε γε καὶ τὸν ἐν χεροῖν κατεῖχον.
1700 Ὦ πάτερ, ὦ φίλος,
ὦ τὸν ἀεὶ κατὰ γᾶς σκότον εἰμένος,
οὐδὲ γὰρ ὡς ἀφίλητος ἐμοί ποτε
καὶ τᾷδε μὴ κυρήσῃς.

ΧΟ. Ἔπραξεν -

ΑΝ. Ἔπραξεν οἷον ἤθελεν.
1705 ΧΟ. Τὸ ποῖον;

ΑΝ. Ἃς ἔχρῃζε γᾶς ἐπὶ ξένας
ἔθανε· κοίταν δ’ ἔχει
νέρθεν εὐσκίαστον αἰέν,
οὐδὲ πένθος ἔλιπ’ ἄκλαυτον.
Ἀνὰ γὰρ ὄμμα σε τόδ’, ὦ
1710 πάτερ, ἐμὸν στένει δακρῦον, οὐδ’ ἔχω
πῶς με χρὴ τὸ σὸν τάλαιναν
ἀφανίσαι τοσόνδ’ ἄχος.
Ὤμοι, γᾶς ἐπὶ ξέ-
νας θανεῖν ἔχρῃζες· ἀλλ’ ἔ-
ρημος ἔθανες ὧδέ μοι.
1715 ΙΣ. Ὦ τάλαινα, τίς ἄρα με πότμος
ἐπιμένει σέ τ’, ὦ φίλα,
πατρὸς ὦδ’ ἐρήμας;
˘ – ˘ – ˘ – ˘ –
– ˘ ˘ – ˘ – –
1720 ΧΟ. Ἀλλ’ ἐπεὶ ὀλβίως γ’ ἔλυ-
σεν τὸ τέλος, φίλαι, βίου,
λήγετε τοῦδ’ ἄχους· κακῶν
γὰρ δυσάλωτος οὐδείς.

ΑΝ. Πάλιν, φίλα, συθῶμεν. Str. 2 .

ΙΣ. Ὡς τί ῥέξομεν;
1725 ΑΝ. Ἵμερος ἔχει με -

ΙΣ. Τίς;

ΑΝ. τὰν χθόνιον ἑστίαν ἰδεῖν -

ΙΣ. Τίνος;

ΑΝ. πατρός, τάλαιν’ ἐγώ.

ΙΣ. Θέμις δὲ πῶς τάδ’ ἐστί; μῶν
οὐχ ὁρᾷς;
1730 ΑΝ. Τί τόδ’ ἐπέπληξας;

ΙΣ. Καὶ τόδ’, ὡς -

ΑΝ. Τί τόδε μάλ’ αὖθις;

ΙΣ. ἄταφος ἔπιτνε δίχα τε παντός.

ΑΝ. Ἄγε με, καὶ τότ’ ‹ἐπ›ενάριξον.

ΙΣ. ¯ ¯

ΑΝ. ¯ ¯ ˘ ¯ ˘

ΙΣ. Αἰαῖ, δυστάλαινα,
1735 ποῖ δῆτ’ αὖθις ὧδ’ ἔρημος ἄπορος
αἰῶνα τλάμον’ ἔξω;

ΧΟ. Φίλαι, τρέσητε μηδέν. Ant. 2 .

ΑΝ. Ἀλλὰ ποῖ φύγω;

ΧΟ. Καὶ πάρος ἀπέφυγε -

ΑΝ. Τί;
1740 ΧΟ. ‹τὰ› σφῷν τὸ μὴ πίτνειν κακῶς.

ΑΝ. Φρονῶ -

ΧΟ. Τί δῆθ’ ὑπερνοεῖς;

ΑΝ. Ὅπως μολούμεθ’ ἐς δόμους,
οὐκ ἔχω.

ΧΟ. Μηδέ γε μάτευε.

ΑΝ. Μόγος ἔχει.

ΧΟ. Καὶ πάρος ἐπεῖ‹χεν›.
1745 ΑΝ. Τοτὲ μὲν ἄπορα, τοτὲ δ’ ὕπερθεν.

ΧΟ. Μέγ’ ἄρα πέλαγος ἐλάχετόν τι.

ΑΝ. Ναὶ ναί.

ΧΟ. Ξύμφημι καὐτός.

ΑΝ. Φεῦ φεῦ, ποῖ μόλωμεν,
ὦ Ζεῦ; ἐλπίδων γὰρ ἐς τί‹ν’ ἔτι› με
1750
δαίμων τανῦν γ’ ἐλαύνει;

ΘΗ. Παύετε θρῆνον, παῖδες· ἐν οἷς γὰρ
χάρις ἡ χθονία ξύν’ ἀπόκειται
πενθεῖν οὐ χρή· νέμεσις γάρ.

ΑΝ. Ὦ τέκνον Αἰγέως, προσπίτνομέν σοι.
1755 ΘΗ. Τίνος, ὦ παῖδες, χρείας ἀνύσαι;

ΑΝ. Τύμβον θέλομεν
προσιδεῖν αὐταὶ πατρὸς ἡμετέρου.

ΘΗ. Ἀλλ’ οὐ θεμιτὸν κεῖσ’ ἔ‹στι› μολεῖν.

ΑΝ. Πῶς εἶπας, ἄναξ, κοίραν’ Ἀθηνῶν;
1760 ΘΗ. Ὦ παῖδες, ἀπεῖπεν ἐμοὶ κεῖνος
μήτε πελάζειν ἐς τούσδε τόπους
μήτ’ ἐπιφωνεῖν μηδένα θνητῶν
θήκην ἱερὰν ἣν κεῖνος ἔχει.
Καὶ ταῦτά μ’ ἔφη πράσσοντα καλῶς
1765 χώραν ἕξειν αἰὲν ἄλυπον.
Ταῦτ’ οὖν ἔκλυεν δαίμων ἡμῶν
χὠ πάντ’ ἀΐων Διὸς Ὅρκος.

ΑΝ. Ἀλλ’ εἰ τάδ’ ἔχει κατὰ νοῦν κείνῳ,
ταῦτ’ ἂν ἀπαρκοῖ· Θήβας δ’ ἡμᾶς
1770 τὰς ὠγυγίους πέμψον, ἐάν πως
διακωλύσωμεν ἰόντα φόνον
τοῖσιν ὁμαίμοις.

ΘΗ. Δράσω καὶ τάδε, καὶ πάνθ’ ‹ὁπ›όσ’ ἂν
μέλλω πράσσειν πρόσφορά θ’ ὑμῖν
1775 καὶ τῷ κατὰ γῆς ὃς νέον ἔρρει
πρὸς χάριν, οὐ δεῖ μ’ ἀποκάμνειν.

ΧΟ. Ἀλλ’ ἀποπαύετε μηδ’ ἐπὶ πλείω
θρῆνον ἐγείρετε·
πάντως γὰρ ἔχει τάδε κῦρος.

FRAGMENTS

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ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ

ΑΘΑΜΑΣ Α΄ et Β΄

καταγνῶναι
ἔρκεσι
ἐψία
ὡς ὢν ἄπαις τε κἀγύναιξ κἀνέστιος
Νεφέλη
οἴνῳ γὰρ ἡμῖν Ἀχελῷος ἆρα νᾷ
λευκὴν ἡμέραν
ἀγχήρης
ἔπιπλα (an ον)
ἐπισίγματα
ἐχρωματίσθη

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οὐκει.[
‹ΑΙ.› πολλή.[
ἀλλουχ̣ο̣[
‹ΑΙ.› ἀλλ’ οὐμο[
10 οὔτ’ ἂν πυ[
‹ΑΙ.› θανεῖν γα[
οὔπω παρε[
‹ΑΙ.› θρασύς γ’ ομ.[

πολλῶν γα[
15 ΑΙ. ἀλλ’ ἡ μα.[
Λοκρῶν ε[
πᾳιπὲ..[
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... [..]υτελευτα[ ]
Α]ΘΗΝΑ· ποίου Δρύαντος κεῖνος ἐγγόν[
Τροίαν ἐπεστράτευσεν, Ὠργεῖοι; τ[
ὃς τἄργα ταῦτα πρὸς θεοὺς ἐμή[σατο;
5 μῶν τῶν ἔνερθεν ἐξανέστηκ[εν
ὁ βυ[ρ]σοφώνης Ζηνὶ Σαλμωνε[;
τίν[ ]σ εἰκάσω τάδ’ ἔργ[
ὅστι[ς]ακολλητον βρε[
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καταστίκτου κυνὸς
σπολὰς Λίβυσσα, παρδαλήφορον δέρος
τὸ χρύσεον δὲ τᾶς Δίκας
δέδορκεν ὄμμα, τὸν δ’ ἄδικον ἀμείβεται
ἄνθρωπός ἐστι πνεῦμα καὶ σκιὰ μόνον
σοφοὶ τύραννοι τῶν σοφῶν ξυνουσίᾳ
τί σοι ὁ Ἀπόλλων κεκιθάρικεν; ()
˘(¯¯˘) τῆς φοίνικος ‹(¯¯˘)¯›
ἔτ̣ρυ̣ξε πληγῆς τίτανος ἀρχαίῳ ποδί
καὶ πεζὰ καὶ φορμικτά
Ἕλλην vel Ἑλλάς
δατούμενος

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ

Ταύρειον πῶμα
κέστρᾳ σιδηρᾷ πλευρὰ καὶ κατὰ ῥάχιν
ἤλαυνε παίων
κλύω μὲν οὐκ ἔγωγε, χωρίτην δ’ ὁρῶ
πῶς δῆθ’ ὁδουρῶν ὅμοιος†ἐξέβης λαθών;
ὥσπερ γὰρ ἐν φύλλοισιν αἰγείρου μακρᾶς,
κἂν ἄλλο μηδέν, ἀλλὰ τοὐκείνης κάρα
κινεῖ τις αὔρα κἀνακουφίζει πτερόν

ΑΙΓΕΥΣ· ἐμοὶ μὲν ἀκτὰς ὥρισεν πατὴρ μολεῖν,
πρεσβεῖα νείμας τῆσδε γῆς· ¯ Λύκῳ
τὸν ἀντίπλευρον κῆπον Εὐβοίας νέμει,
Νίσῳ δὲ τὴν ὅμαυλον ἐξαιρεῖ χθόνα
Σκίρωνος ἀκτῆς· τῆς δὲ γῆς τὸ πρὸς νότον
ὁ σκληρὸς οὗτος καὶ γίγαντας ἐκτρέφων
εἵληχε Πάλλας
κλωστῆρσι χειρῶν ὀργάσας κατήνυσε (Theseus)
*j*σειραῖα δεσμά
ἀρύθμων

ΑΙΓΙΣΘΟΣ

ΑΙΘΙΟΠΕΣ

τοιαῦτά τοί σοι πρὸς χάριν τε κοὐ βίᾳ
λέγω· σὺ δ’ αὐτός, ὥσπερ οἱ σοφοί, τὰ μὲν
δίκαι’ ἐπαίνει, τοῦ δὲ κερδαίνειν ἔχου
τετράπτεροι γὰρ νῶτον ἐν δεσμώμασι
σφηκοὶ κελαινόρινες
ἄναρκτον
ἀνθοβοσκόν
ἀπιστεῖ
ὀρθόπτερον

ΑΙΧΜΑΛΩΤΙΔΕΣ

δάκος γὰρ οὐδὲν τοῖσιν εὐόργοις ἔπος
στρατοῦ καθαρτὴς κἀπομαγμάτων ἵδρις
ἀσπὶς μὲν ἡμὴ λίγδος ὣς πυκνομματεῖ
ὑφῃρέθη σου κάλαμος ὡσπερεὶ λύρας
ἐν παντὶ γάρ τοι σκορπίος φρουρεῖ λίθῳ
καὶ βωμιαῖον ἐσχάρας λαβών
καὶ νησιώτας καὶ μακρᾶς Εὐρωπίας ...
ταύτην ἐγὼ Κίλλαν τε καὶ Χρύσην
εἰ μικρὸς ὢν τὰ φαῦλα νικήσας ἔχω
ἔσπεισα βαιᾶς κύλικος ὥστε δεύτερα ()
Μύνου τ’ Ἐπιστρόφου τε
πατὴρ δὲ χρυσυσδύς†ἀμφίλινα κρούπαλα
ἄχνην Λυδῆς κερκίδος
Σαρπηδὼν ἀκτή
αἰχμόδετος
ἀλιτρία
ἀνηκές
ἀπειθής
ἀρτάνη
ἄσεπτον
ἐμπλευροῦ
ἐνόπαις
ἐπιμάσσεται
Ἴαινα
ἱερόλας
ἱκτορεύσομεν
ἐν στερνομάντεσι

ΑΚΡΙΣΙΟΣ

ὡς ἐπιψάλλειν βίδην τε καὶ ξυναυλίαν ˘–

ΧΟ. βοᾷ τις, ὦ· ἀκούετ’; ἢ μάτην ὑλῶ;
ἅπαντα γάρ τοι τῷ φοβουμένῳ ψοφεῖ.
ἀλλ’ οὐδὲν ἕρπει ψεῦδος εἰς γῆρας χρόνου
δῆλον γάρ· ἐν δεσμοῖσι δραπέτης ἀνὴρ
κῶλον ποδισθεὶς πᾶν πρὸς ἡδονὴν λέγει
ῥῆσις βραχεῖα τοῖς φρονοῦσι σώφρονα
πρὸς τοὺς τεκόντας καὶ φυτεύσαντας πρέπει,
ἄλλως τε καὶ κόρῃ τε κἀργείᾳ γένος,
αἷς κόσμος ἡ σιγή τε καὶ τὰ παῦρ’ ἔπη
θάρσει, γύναι· τὰ πολλὰ τῶν δεινῶν, ὄναρ
πνεύσαντα νυκτός, ἡμέρας μαλάσσεται
τοῦ ζῆν γὰρ οὐδεὶς ὡς ὁ γηράσκων ἐρᾷ
τὸ ζῆν γάρ, ὦ παῖ, παντὸς ἥδιον γέρας·
θανεῖν γὰρ οὐκ ἔξεστι τοῖς αὐτοῖσι δίς.
Ἀκτίτης λίθος
Μαριεὺς ἁλοιμός
ἰλλάδας γονάς
ἄδοξα
ἀνταίαν
ἀποφανθείς
ἀρώματα
ἄστομος

ΑΛΕΑΔΑΙ

ἐνταῦθα μέντοι πάντα τἀνθρώπων νοσεῖ,
κακοῖς ὅταν θέλωσιν ἰᾶσθαι κακά
τοῖς γὰρ δικαίοις ἀντέχειν οὐ ῥᾴδιον
κακὸν τὸ κεύθειν κοὐ πρὸς ἀνδρὸς εὐγενοῦς
καὶ γὰρ δικαία γλῶσσ’ ἔχει κράτος μέγα
ὦ παῖ, σιώπα· πόλλ’ ἔχει σιγὴ καλά
τί ταῦτα πολλῶν ῥημάτων ἔτ’ ἔστι σοι;
τὰ γὰρ περισσὰ πανταχοῦ λυπήρ’ ἔπη.
μὴ πάντ’ ἐρεύνα· πολλὰ καὶ λαθεῖν καλόν
κοὐκ οἶδ’ ὅ τι χρὴ πρὸς ταῦτα λέγειν,
ὅταν οἵ γ’ ἀγαθοὶ πρὸς τῶν ἀγενῶν
κατανικῶνται·
ποία πόλις ἂν τάδ’ ἐνέγκοι;
δοκῶ μέν, οὐδείς. ἀλλ’ ὅρα μὴ κρεῖσσον ᾖ
καὶ δυσσεβοῦντα τῶν ἐναντίων κρατεῖν
ἢ δοῦλον αὐτὸν ὄντα τῶν πέλας κλύειν
A. παῦσαι· καταρκεῖ τοῦδε κεκλῆσθαι πατρός.
B. εἴπερ πέφυκάς γ’· εἰ δὲ μή, μείζων βλάβη.
A. τό τοι νομισθὲν τῆς ἀληθείας κρατεῖ.
A. ὁ δὴ νόθος τις γνησίοις ἴσον σθενεῖ;
B. ἅπαν τὸ χρηστὸν γνησίαν ἔχει φύσιν.
τὰ χρήματ’ ἀνθρώποισιν εὑρίσκει φίλους,
αὖθις δὲ τιμάς, εἶτα τῆς ὑπερτάτης
τυραννίδος θακοῦσιν ἀγχίστην ἕδραν.
ἔπειτα δ’ οὐδεὶς ἐχθρὸς οὔτε φύεται
*e*πρὸς χρήμαθ’ οἵ τε φύντες ἀρνοῦνται στυγεῖν.
δεινὸς γὰρ ἔρπειν πλοῦτος ἔς τε τἄβατα
καὶ πρὸς τὰ βατά, χὠπόθεν πένης ἀνὴρ
οὐδ’ ἐντυχὼν δύναιτ’ ἂν ὢν ἐρᾷ τυχεῖν.
καὶ γὰρ δυσειδὲς σῶμα καὶ δυσώνυμον
*j*γλώσσῃ σοφὸν τίθησιν εὔμορφόν τ’ ἰδεῖν.
μόνῳ δὲ χαίρειν κἀν νόσων ξυνουσίᾳ
πάρεστιν αὐτῷ κἀπικρύπτεσθαι κακά.
νομάς τέ τις κεροῦσσ’ ἀπ’ ὀρθίων πάγων
καθεῖρπεν ἔλαφος (sc. ἡ Τηλέφου τροφός)

ἄρασα μύξας ¯˘ καὶ κερασφόρους
στόρθυγγας εἶρφ’ ἔκηλος
ἐφυμνεῖς
φρονεῖν

ΑΛΕΙΤΗΣ

ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΣ

ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἄτλας γὰρ βάσανος ἡ Λυδὴ λίθος
οὐ γάρ τι θεσμὰ τοῖσιν ἀστίταις πρέπει
βοτῆρα νικᾶν ἄνδρας ἀστίτας. τί γάρ;
στείχων δ’ ἀγρώστην ὄχλον ⏑⏑–⏑–
ἀμαλθεύειν
δύσαυλος
Ἐφέσεια
θηλάστρια
μαιεύτριαν
μνείαν (μνήμην)
ψαλάσσων

ΑΛΗΤΗΣ vide ΑΛΕΙΤΗΣ

ΑΛΚΗΣΤΙΣ

ΑΛΚΜΕΩΝ

εἴθ’ εὖ φρονήσαντ’ εἰσίδοιμί πως φρενῶν
ἐπήβολον καλῶν σε
αἰνῶ
ἀραίας

ΑΜΥΚΟΣ ΣΑΤΥΡΙΚΟΣ

γέρανοι, χελῶναι, γλαῦκες, ἰκτῖνοι, λαγοί
σιαγόνας τε δὴ
μαλθακὰς τίθησι

ΑΜΦΙΑΡΕΩΣ - ΑΜΦΙΑΡΕΩΣ ΣΑΤΥΡΙΚΟΣ

ὁ πινοτήρης τοῦδε μάντεως χοροῦ
ἔνθ’ οὔτε πέλλεις οἶ ἄγραυλος βότος†
ἔτ’ αὖ[ ] ὥσπερ ἁλιεὺς πληγεὶς [φρ]ενῶν διδάσκαλον
ἁγνίσαι
ἀλεξαίθριον
τρασιά
φρονεῖν
ὡρακιᾶσαι θλιβομένης τῆς καρδίας

ΑΜΦΙΤΡΥΩΝ

ἐπεὶ δὲ βλάστοι, τῶν τριῶν μίαν λαβεῖν
εὔσοιαν ἀρκεῖ
ἀμφιτέρμως
ἄτμητον()

ΑΝΔΡΟΜΑΧΗ

παρασάγγης

ΑΝΔΡΟΜΕΔΑ

ἡμιουτὸν†κούρειον ᾐρέθη πόλει·
νόμος γάρ ἐστι τοῖσι βαρβάροις Κρόνῳ
θυηπολεῖν βρότειον ἀρχῆθεν() γένος.
ἵπποισιν ἢ κύμβαισι ναυστολεῖς χθόνα;
μηδὲν φοβεῖσθε προσφάτους ἐπιστολάς
ἡ δυστυχὴς ἀθῷος ἐκκρεμωμένη
ἰδοὺ δαφοινὸν μάσθλητα δίγονον
αὐτοχειλέσι ληκύθοις
ἀμφίπρυμνον
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οἰήτας
σάρητον()
Πᾶνες

ΑΝΤΗΝΟΡΙΔΑΙ

ὄρνιθα καὶ κήρυκα καὶ διάκονον
ἀφεψιασάμην
ἐκβαβάξαι

ΑΤΡΕΥΣ Η ΜΥΚΗΝΑΙΑΙ

μὰ τὴν ἐκείνου δειλίαν, ᾗ βόσκεται,
θῆλυς μὲν αὐτός, ἄρσενας δ’ ἐχθροὺς ἔχων
ἐπισπάσει

ΑΥΓΗ

ΑΧΑΙΩΝ ΣΥΛΛΟΓΟΣ

ὡς ναοφύλακες νυκτέρου ναυκληρίας
πλήκτροις ἀπευθύνουσιν οὐρίαν τρόπιν
σὺ δ’ ἐν θρόνοισι γραμμάτων πτυχὰς ἔχων
νέμ’ εἴ τις οὐ πάρεστιν ὃς ξυνώμοσεν
φάλανθον Νέστορος κάρα
ἐκκεκώπηται
ἐπιξενοῦσθαι
ἐπισειούσης
ξυμβόλους

ΑΧΙΛΛΕΩΣ ΕΡΑΣΤΑΙ ‹ΣΑΤΥΡΟΙ›

τὸ γὰρ νόσημα τοῦτ’ ἐφίμερον κακόν·
ἔχοιμ’ ἂν αὐτὸ μὴ κακῶς ἀπεικάσαι.
ὅταν πάγου φανέντος αἰθρίου χεροῖν
κρύσταλλον ἁρπάσωσι παῖδες εὐπαγῆ,
τὰ πρῶτ’ ἔχουσιν ἡδονὰς ποταινίους·
τέλος δ’ ὁ θυμὸς οὔθ’ ὅπως ἀφῇ θέλει
οὔτ’ ἐν χεροῖν τὸ κτῆμα σύμφορον μένειν.
οὕτω δὲ τοὺς ἐρῶντας αὐτὸς ἵμερος
δρᾶν καὶ τὸ μὴ δρᾶν πολλάκις προίεται
‹ΠΗΛΕΥΣ·› τίς γάρ με μόχθος ¯˘ οὐκ ἐπεστάτει;
10 λέων δράκων τε, πῦρ, ὕδωρ
ἢ δορὸς διχόστομον πλᾶκτρον·
δίπτυχοι γὰρ ὀδύναι μιν ἤρικον
Ἀχιλληΐου δόρατος

ΦΟΙΝΙΞ (ad Satyros)· παπαῖ, τὰ παιδίχ’, ὡς ὁρᾷς, ἀπώλεσας
σὺ δ’, ὦ Σύαγρε, Πηλιωτικὸν τρέφος
γλώσσης μελίσσῃ τῷ κατερρυηκότι
ὁ δ’ ἔνθ’ ὅπλοις ἀρρῶξιν Ἡφαίστου τέχνῃ
ὀμμάτων ἄπο
λόγχας ἵησιν
ἐξανάξει

BAKXAI

ΔΑΙΔΑΛΟΣ

εἴλλει μὲν εἴσω τόνδ’ ἀχαλκεύτῳ πέδῃ
τεκτόναρχος μοῦσα
ἀλλ’ οὐδὲ μὲν δὴ κάνθαρος τῶν Αἰτναίων
πάντων
Γοργάδων
ἐσέφθην
χειροβοσκόν

ΔΑΝΑΗ

οὐκ οἶδα τὴν σὴν πεῖραν· ἓν δ’ ἐπίσταμαι·
τοῦ παιδὸς ὄντος τοῦδ’ ἐγὼ διόλλυμαι
γόνοιον†μήλων κἀφροδισίαν ἄγραν
ζῆ, πῖνε, φέρβου
ἀνθήμερον
βράχιστον
δεδαιμονισμένον

ΔΙΟΝΥΣΙΣΚΟΣ ΣΑΤΥΡΙΚΟΣ

ὅταν γὰρ αὐτῷ προσφέρω βρῶσιν διδούς,
τὴν ῥῖνά μ’ εὐθὺς ψηλαφᾷ κἄνω φέρει

τὴν χεῖρα πρὸς ‹τὸ› φαλακρὸν ἡδὺ διαγελῶν
‹ΧΟ.› πόθεν ποτ’ ἄλυπον ὧδε
ηὗρον ἄνθος ἀνίας;
θωχθείς

ΔΟΛΟΠΕΣ

εὐναῖος ἄν που δραπέτιν στέγην ἔχων
χαμεύνη vel χάμευνα

ΕΛΕΝΗ

ΕΛΕΝΗΣ ΑΠΑΙΤΗΣΙΣ

καὶ γὰρ χαρακτὴρ αὐτὸς ἐν γλώσσῃ τί με
παρηγορεῖ Λάκωνος ὀσμᾶσθαι λόγου
γυναῖκα δ’ ἐξελόντες ἢ θράσσει γένυν
τε ὡς τοῦ μὲν ἔωλον γραφίοις ἐνημμένοις†
ἐμοὶ δὲ λῷστον αἷμα ταύρειον πιεῖν
καὶ μὴ ‘πὶ πλεῖον τῶνδ’ ἔχειν δυσφημίας
ἀναχαιτίζει (ἀπειθεῖ καὶ ἀντιτείνει)
Παμφυλία (Cilicia)

ΕΛΕΝΗΣ ΑΡΠΑΓΗ

ΕΛΕΝΗΣ ΓΑΜΟΣ

πέπων ἐρινὸς ⏑¯⏑¯ ἀχρεῖος ὢν
ἐς βρῶσιν ἄλλους ἐξερινάζεις λόγῳ
νένωται
ὀροσάγγαι
πανόν

ΕΠΙΓΟΝΟΙ

ὀλόμενε παίδων, ποῖον εἴρηκας λόγον;

ΑΛΚΜΕΩΝ· ἀνδροκτόνου γυναικὸς ὁμογενὴς ἔφυς.

ΑΔΡΑΣΤΟΣ· σὺ δ’ αὐτόχειρ γε μητρὸς ἥ σ’ ἐγείνατο.
φιλεῖ γὰρ ἡ δύσκλεια τοῖς φθονουμένοις
νικᾶν ἐπ’ αἰσχροῖς ἢ ‘πὶ τοῖς καλοῖς πλέον
ὦ πᾶν σὺ τολμήσασα καὶ πέρα, γύναι.
κάκιον ἄλλ’ οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδ’ ἔσται ποτὲ
γυναικός, εἴ τι πῆμα γίγνεται βροτοῖς
τὸ κοῖλον Ἄργος οὐ κατοικήσαντ’ ἔτι

ΕΠΙ ΤΑΙΝΑΡΩΙ (vel ΕΠΙΤΑΙΝΑΡΙΟΙ) ΣΑΤΥΡΟΙ

τοιγὰρ ϊωδὴ†φυλάξαι χοῖρον ὥστε δεσμίαν
ἄγανον ξύλον
ἀλαλίαν
ἀργέμων
οὐ κωφεῖ

ΕΡΙΣ

ἐγὼ δὲ πεινῶσ’ αὖ πρὸς ἴτρια βλέπω
εὔωρος γάμου
μίαν μίαν

ΕΡΙΦΥΛΗ

‹ὦ› γλῶσσ’, ἐν οἷσιν ἀνδράσιν τιμὴν ἔχεις,
ὅπου λόγοι σθένουσι τῶν ἔργων πλέον
ὅπου δὲ μὴ τἄριστ’ ἐλευθέρως λέγειν
ἔξεστι, νικᾷ δ’ ἐν πόλει τὰ χείρονα,
ἁμαρτίαι σφάλλουσι τὴν σωτηρίαν
γήρᾳ προσῆκον σῷζε τὴν εὐφημίαν
ἀρετῆς βέβαιαι δ’ εἰσὶν αἱ κτήσεις μόνης
ἀνδρῶν γὰρ ἐσθλῶν στέρνον οὐ μαλάσσεται
πῶς οὖν μάχωμαι θνητὸς ὢν θείᾳ τύχῃ;
ὅπου τὸ δεινόν, ἐλπίς οὐδὲν ὠφελεῖ.
ἄπελθε· κινεῖς ὕπνον ἰατρὸν νόσου

ΕΡΙΦΥΛΗ (ad Alcmaeonem)· καὶ γὰρ Ἀργείους ὁρῶ

ΕΡΜΙΟΝΗ

ἀλλ’ ὦ πατρῴας γῆς ἀγυιαίου πέδον
γνωστός

ΕΥΜΗΛΟΣ

καθελών

ΕΥΡΥΑΛΟΣ

ΕΥΡΥΠΥΛΟΣ

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κόραξ ἐπ̣άδ[
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κράζει θυηλη̣[
τί δ’ ο̣ὖν οσωσδ̣[
ἔργον τι δειλο̣.[
ἀ̣λ̣λ’ οὔ τι μὴ συ̣τ̣[
10 [..]λων ἀκηδ̣[.]σ̣.[
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‹ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ·› [ ].ϙα[
[ ]ην μεταιχ[μι
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ἐρρηξάτην ἐς κύκλα χαλκέων ὅπλων
[ ]σ.[..].τέρου·
[ ] ἄνευ δορὸς
[πα]λαίσμασιν
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[ ]ῠ πρὸς οὐραν[ὸν
15 [ ]δ̣’ ἐστενάζετο
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[ ]γματος φυγὼν
[ ]ς δορὸς
20 ἔγχος] μέσον
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[ ]υρησας κάτω
[ ].των φάος·
[Ἀ]χιλλέως
25 [ ]ουσδ’ ἰωμένη
[Τ]ήλεφοῠ λ̣έγω·
[ἰ]άσατ[ο]·
[ ]κ.νουσταχυς
καθεῖλ’ οσωτ.[..] ηυρ.[
30 ‹ΑΣΤΥΟΧΗ·› οἰοῖ, οἰ[οῖ].
διπλοῦς ἀνεστέναξ[α ca. 11 ll.]φᾳ̣[....]
‹ΧΟ.› πατρο[ca. 15 ll.]
ραν· ἐπ[ca. 14 ll.]μος ἴδε τέκνων.
‹ΑΣ.› τρίτην δ’ ἐπ’ ἐμ̣[è ca. 11 ll.] ‹ΧΟ.› κ̣[α]ῖ̣ γὰρ οὖν
35 προσάγ[α]γ’ ωδ̣ι[.].ι̣γ[...]ῠ διαίνεις·
ἐπεὶ κτησίων φρενῶν ἐξέδυς.
‹ΑΣ.› ὦ δαῖμον, ὦ δύσδαιμον, ὦ κείρας [ἐ]μέ.
‹ΧΟ.› ἀγχοῦ προσεῖπας· οὐ γὰρ ἐκτὸς ἑστὼς
σύρει δὴ φύρδαν.
40 ‹ΑΣ.› ἐπισπάσει δί̣κᾳ με.
‹ΧΟ.› δίκᾳ ναί.
‹ΑΣ.› ἀλλ’ ὡς τάχιστ’ ἄριστα.

‹ΧΟ.› ἐέ·
τί φήσομεν, τί λέξομεν;
‹ΑΣ.› τίς οὐχὶ τοὐμὸν ἐν δίκῃ βαλεῖ κάρα;
‹ΧΟ.› δαίμων ἔκ̣ειρεν ἐν δίκ̣ᾳ σε, δαίμ̣ων.
‹ΑΣ.› ἦ καὶ βε̣βᾶσι τὸν [ν]εκρὸν πρὸς τῷ κα[κ]ῷ
γέλωτ’ ἔχ̣ο̣ντεσ̣ ἄ[λλ]ο̣ν Ἀργεῖοι βίᾳ;
‹ΑΓ.› οὐκ ἐ̣σ̣ τ̣οσοῦ̣τον ἦλ̣θ̣ον ὥστ’ ἐπε̣γχαν[ε]ῖν,
50 ἐπεὶ π̣άλαισ̣μα κοιν̣[ὸ]ν ἠγωνι̣[ς]μ̣έν[ο]ι̣
ἔκειν̣[τ]ο νεκροὶ τυ̣[τ]θ̣ὸν ἀ̣λλήλ̣ῳ̣ν ἄ̣π̣ο,
ὁ μὲν δ[.]κητ̣ό̣ς, ὁ δὲ [τὸ] πᾶν [.].[.....]ο̣.
[.]υμην Ἀχαι.[.....]οση[.....]γ̣ος·
ὡ̣ς δ’ ἔ̣κ̣ τε πλ.[.....]ι̣κο[.....]οτᾳ̣[...]
55 [..]τους δια[ca. 18 ll.].
[..].[.]ρ.ομ[
[ca. 24 ll.]σιδ̣ο̣ν
[ca. 24 ll. ν]εκροῦ̃
[ca. 26 ll.]ρ[.]νη[
60 [ca. 25 ll.]ηχ[.]ιγ[
[ca. 26 ll.]ανηρ[
[ca. 24 ll.]ῳ̣ τροφ[
[ca. 22 ll.]ν ἧμ̣ατι·
[.....].[.....] κυρῶν ἔτ̣ι
65 [..]κ̣.[.....].ερ̣[.....ἔ]ρρηξεν νότοσ’.
[το]ι̣αῦ̣τα πολλῶ̃[ν....]ν ἐ̣ρρ̣[ό]θει στόμα·
[π]ο̣λλὴ δὲ σινδών, [πολ]λὰ δ’ Ἰστρ[ι]ανίδων
ὕ̣φη γυναικῶν ἀνδ̣[ρὸ]σ̣ ἐ̣ρριπτ[ά]ζετο,
γ̣ε̣κρῷ̃ διδόντες ο[ὐδ]ὲν ὠφελ[ο]υμένῳ.
70 ὁ δ’ ἀμφὶ πλευραῖς καὶ σφαγαῖσ̣ι [κ]είμενος,
πατ̣[ὴρ] μὲν οὗ, πατρῷ̃α δ’ ἐξαυδ[ῶ]ν ἔπη,
Πρ̣ί̣ᾳ̣[μος] ἔκλαιε τὸν τέκνων ὀμ[αί]μονα,
τὸν [π]ᾳ̣ῖ̣δ̣ᾳ̣ καὶ γέ̣ρ̣ο̣ντα καὶ νεαγ̣[ί]ᾳ̣ν,
τὸν οὔτε Μυσὸν οὔτε Τηλέφου̣ [κα]λ̣ῶν,
75 ἀλλ’ ὡς φυτεύσας αὐτὸς ἐκκαλούμ̣[εν]ος·
‘οἴμοι, τέκνον, πρ[ο]ύδωκά σ’ ἐσχάτη[ν ἔ]χων
Φρυξὶν μεγίστην ‹τ’› ἐλπίδων σωτη̣[ρία]ν.
χρόνον ξενωθεὶς οὐ μακρὸν π[ολ]λῶν κακῶν
μνήμην παρέξεις τοῖς .[.....]οις ἀεί,
80 ὅσ’ οὔτε Μέμ̣υ̣[ω]ν οὔτε Σα[ρπηδών
π[.(.).]θηπ[..].[...]αιπερ̣ αἰχ̣[

πόλλ’ ῆ[.....]ο.[
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85 [..]λλοι̣σι̣ [
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ἔπεισεν ἀβου̣[λ
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10 προλι[π
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10 ἰὼ δόρυ Τηλ̣[εφ
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ὦ̃ λόγχα σώτ[ειρα
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[ ]χι τευχ[
[ ]σαι Διὸς
[ ]..[.]ς εὐτ[υχ]εῖ θανώ̣ν·
[πα]γκάλως δ’ [ἀ]π̣ώλετο
5 [ ]ϙ̣ι θε[ϛ]μὸν ἰδρῦ̣σθαι τ̣ὸ νῦ̃[ν
[ ] κοινόθαᾳ̣κα λάξοα
[Τη]λέφου̣ ξυνουσί̣α̣ν
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[ ]ι τῷδε, μηδ’ ἄνε̣υ
10 [ ].ι τ̣ικτούσῃ τε̣[.].[
[ ]θ[.]σιν· ο[..]αροᾳ
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[]γ̣ωνας· ἡ δὲ κλῃδὸς [
[]ν ἥδ’ ἀνορ̣θ[.].[.] χάρι[
[].[.]υδος ὡς α[..]ο̣ς νο̣[
[]τ̣ο̣ν ὥσπερ ἡ [φά]τις [
10 [ ]ἦλθε λη[...]τ̣ος π̣[
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⏑˘] φοι̣τᾷ̣· τι̣[
⏑]μεν οὐδ[ὲ]ν τῶν̣ λ̣.[
⏑˘] ὑμῖν δ’, [ὦ] ξένοι, δυσήκοα
...
[ ].ς
[ὁ]δῷ̣

[ ]

[ ]

5 []
[]η̣ν τάδε·
...
...
[ ]ν[
[ ]α̣[
[ ].ω[
[ ].ζωμ̣ε̣[
[]ε̣ρ̣οντ̣α̣[
[]α̣ι· νῦ̣ν̣ τ[
[]εξεμησ.[
[]α· σ̣ὸν η.[
...
...
[ ]ωδε[
[ ].ν.[.].ε.σ.ιτ[
[ ].τι δαιμονι[
[ ]ξουσ’ ὅ̣στις ἦλθ̣[
[βέ]βηκεν ὧδε πρ̣ι̣[
[ ].ισον χρ̣όν̣ο̣ς μ[
[ ].[...]αρ’ ω.ώ̣.[
[ ]τ̣ον[
...
...
[ ]ρ̣ελ̣.[

[ ]ς ἐρμη[
[].εξε· κ[
[]ῤανδρ[

[]..[..].[

...
...
[ ].ι̣[
[ ]ǫητ[
[]λ̣όγια τ[
[]ε̣ιτασ.[
[].νηθε̣[
[ ]λλαδ̣[
...
...
]ω̣ǫ̣[
]· πελα̣[
...
...
]ǫ̣.[
]φε̣ιǫ̣[
].λημ[
...
[ ].υναν[
[ ] βλεμμα̣[
[ ]τος γὰρ ασ[
[ἀλ]λ’ εἶ’ ἐπειγε[
[ ]εῖσ..εινο[
[ ]άσω τάδ’ ω[
[ ]ας μέλαθρα ν[
10 [ ]νακινεῖσθαι τ[
[ ]χρόνῳ μάλι[στ
[ο]ὐχ ὁρῶ· βέβηκε̣[.].[
[δ]ωμάτων ἄγχι πρ.[
[ ]τος γύναι λαγέτ[α][
15 [φρ]ο̣ῦδός ἐσθ’ ὁ ξένος
[ ].μ’ Ἀχαιοῖσιν αἰσιωτ[ατ
[ ].η τέτραπται το.[

[ ]ζων ὑπ’ ἄτῃ τηλ[
[ ]α μὴ σὺν κακῷ φθε[
20 [ ]ονο̣πλὴξ εὖνις ατ̣ι[
[ ]κ̣ηπτος ὥρᾳ πόνῳ
[ ]ε̣[ ]η θ̣ανὼν ἄζεται κατ[
οὐδ]ᾳμῶς ἔχοιμ’ ἂν εἰπεῖν τ[
[ ] ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀτρείδη[ς
25 [ ].σ̣ο̣.τ̣ηλου δοκάζει τη[
[ ]νοση βαθεια[...].[
[ ]ᾳ....[..]π̣ᾳ.[
...
...
[ ].
[ ]φου
[ ]κρατω·
[ ]τε
5 [ ]μ̣οις τάχα

[ ]

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[ ] [ ]

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10 []
[]σ̣σεται
[]τ̣αι
[]ε̣γω
[ ]..
15 [ ]ασιν
[ ]ν·
[ ]α·

[ ].

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...
[ ]ταδρᾳε.[

–˘–] ἀλλὰ ταῦτ’ ἐγὼ.[˘–
–˘–]ηῦρον· οὐδεπώποτ[–
–˘–]ṭαν παῦλα καὶ κακῶν [˘–
5 –˘]ṇστων ἡ τύχη μεθίσ[ταται
–˘–]ṿ τάχιστα· τοῦ λόγου [˘–
–˘–]ḷιḍείημεν εἰ θρασὺν τ[˘–
–˘–] ṭῆς τύχης ᾰ̣ṿαστατ[–
–˘–]υνημεῤ[....]ζετα[ι
...
[]ọṵ[
[]ą̣ṣ̣[
[]ασδ[
[ ]ọṣ̣[
[ ]ω[
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[ ]ξ[
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]ḍυσα[
]ḷι γὰρ [
]υταṣ̣[

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...
[]ηικαρα[
[].τα πάντε[ς
[ ]ασι νυκτὸ[ς
[ ] ἰὼ πολ[
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[ ]αις· [
[]ακτασ[
[]ιμολο.[
[]ας
[]εμ..[
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[ ]η[
[]χετ[
[ ]και[
[ ]αδ[
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[ ]σιο[
[]ασεντ[
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]ντ[
]ωιξ[
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[]ατο[ι]ọ[
[ ]γγε[

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[]ς Ἰλιο[
[ ]κειν[
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[ ]νᾳ[
[]ᾳιμε[
[ ]σο[
[]ẹια β[
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η σὺ και[
καὶ κọ[
[..]υκ.[
[..]ιτ[
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ωσφα[
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π̣.[
τ̣ο̣[
εἶα δ[
κερδ̣[
ἔα· τί φ[
...
τ̣.[
τὴν [
καλω[
ηδ̣.κ.[
ω̣[.]κ.[
[..]νγ[
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[]α̣...[
[ ]μων[
[¯]γω[
[ ]υ̣έ[
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[ ]του[
[ ]μ̣[
[]τυτ[
[]α̣μελπ̣[
...
...
[ ]υτω[
[ ]ν γ’ α̣[
[]ηιδε[
[ ]π̣[
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[ ]...δ̣[
[ ]φ̣ω
[]κλυων
[]. ἔχω .[
[τ]υχεῖν·
[ ].ουμεν[
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[]ο̣ι
[]ρ̣ε·

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[ ]χ̣.[
[].υβο̣[
[]μ’ οδ[
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]ην·
]σ̣

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[ ]υπο[
[ ].ροσθησ̣[
[].ε· προσθη.[
[]τοσον κρ.[
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[]. βάθ̣ρ̣ο̣ν·
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[]ῃτ[
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...

ΕΥΡΥΣΑΚΗΣ

ἀδόξαστον

ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΣΚΟΣ ΣΑΤΥΡΙΚΟΣ

κρεῖσσον θεοῖς γὰρ ἢ βροτοῖς χάριν φέρειν
τὸν δρῶντα γάρ τι καὶ παθεῖν ὀφείλεται

ΗΡΑΚΛΗΣ ΣΑΤΥΡΙΚΟΣ

¯ συνέλεγον τὰ ξύλ’, ὡς ἐκκαυμάτων
μή μοι μεταξὺ προσδεήσειεν
τρέφουσι κρήνης φύλακα χωρίτην ὄφιν
Κυκλώπιον τροχόν

ΗΡΙΓΟΝΗ

ἃ δὲ
δόξῃ τοπάζω, ταῦτ’ ἰδεῖν σαφῶς θέλω
νῦν δ’ εἰρὴ ὕποφρος ἐξ αὐτῶν†ἔως
ἀπώλεσέν τε καὐτὸς ἐξαπώλετο

ΘΑΜΥΡΑΣ

Θρήϊσσα(ν) σκοπιὰ(ν) Ζηνὸς Ἀθῴου
πηκταὶ δὲ λύραι καὶ μαγαδῖδες
τά τ’ ἐν Ἕλλησι ξόαν’ ἡδυμελῆ
τρίγωνος
φοῖνιξ
πρόποδα μέλεα τάδε σε κλέομεν
τρόχιμα βάσιμα χέρεσι πόδεσι
ᾤχωκε γὰρ κροτητὰ πηκτίδων μέλη
λύρᾳ μοναύλοις τε χειμωντεως
ναος στέρημα κωμασάσης†
ἐκ μὲν Ἐριχθονίου ποτιμάστιον ἔσχεθε (sc. Philonis) κοῦρον
Αὐτόλυκον, πολέων κτεάνων σίνιν Ἄργεϊ κοίλῳ
κάνναβις
ῥηγνὺς (sc. Thamyras) χρυσόδετον κέρας,
ῥηγνὺς ἁρμονίαν χορδοτόνου λύρας
μουσομανεῖ δ’ ἐλάμφθην δακέτῳ ποτὶ δειράν,
ἔχομαι δ’ ἔκ τε λύρας ἔκ τε νόμων, οὓς Θαμύρας
περίαλλα μουσοποιεῖ

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

ὀμπνίου νέφους

ΘΥΕΣΤΗΣ

σοφὸς γὰρ οὐδεὶς πλὴν ὃν ἂν τιμᾷ θεός.
ἀλλ’ εἰς θεοὺς ὁρῶντα, κἂν ἔξω δίκης
χωρεῖν κελεύῃ, κεῖσ’ ὁδοιπορεῖν χρεών·
αἰσχρὸν γὰρ οὐδὲν ὧν ὑφηγοῦνται θεοί.
ἀποπλήκτῳ ποδί
ἀμόρφωτον
αὐτόμοιρος
αὐτόφορτοι
ἐπαίνους
ἀφωσιωμέναι
ἠγόμην
ἔστι γάρ τις ἐναλία
Εὐβοιὶς αἶα· τῇδε βακχεῖος βότρυς
ἐπ’ ἦμαρ ἕρπει. πρῶτα μὲν λαμπρᾶς ἕω
κεκλημάτωται χλωρὸν οἰνάνθης δέμας·
εἶτ’ ἦμαρ αὔξει μέσσον ὄμφακος τύπον,
καὶ κλίνεταί τε κἀποπερκοῦται βότρυς·
δείλῃ δὲ πᾶσα τέμνεται βλαστουμένη
ὀπώρα καλῶς†κἀνακίρναται ποτόν
πρὸς τὴν ἀνάγκην οὐδ’ Ἄρης ἀνθίσταται
ὡς νῦν τάχος στείχωμεν· οὐ γὰρ ἔσθ’ ὅπως
σπουδῆς δικαίας μῶμος ἅψεταί ποτε
ἔχει μὲν ἀλγείν’, οἶδα· πειρᾶσθαι δὲ χρὴ
{ὡς ῥᾷστα τἀναγκαῖα τοῦ βίου φέρειν}
ἐκ τῶν τοιούτων χρή τιν’ ἴασιν λαβεῖν
ἔνεστι γάρ τις καὶ λόγοισιν ἡδονή,
λήθην ὅταν ποιῶσι τῶν ὄντων κακῶν
καίπερ γέρων ὤν· ἀλλὰ τῷ γήρᾳ φιλεῖ
χὠ νοῦς ὁμαρτεῖν καὶ τὸ βουλεύειν ἃ δεῖ
ἢ Ἀτρεῖ μούνῳ καὶ Ζεὺς τροπαῖος ἐσκεκόμισται τόποις;
ἀκήρυκτον
ἄλογα
ἀλωπός
ἀνοσήλευτον
ἀνταίρουσιν

ἀπείρονας
ἀπόθεα
ἀτελῆ
ἐντέλλω

IAMBH

ΙΒΗΡΕΣ

ΙΝΑΧΟΣ

...
[ ]α

[ ]

[ ]

10 [ ]

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[ ]

[ ].υμα·
15 [ ]

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[ ]

[ ]].....

[ ]..[.].....
20 [ ]...[.].[.]..
[ ].[...].οϙ ᾗ ‘νθάδε·
[ ]τε τὸν θ̣εοστυγῆ
[τὸν] ξ̣ένον νοῶ τίς ἦν
[ ] θ̣υρ̣ῶν τ̣ὸ πᾶν μύσος
25 [ ].ἐπῃνέθη καλά
[ ].ηυρ̣έθη κακά
[ ].ἐξ ἐ[ν]ωπίων
[ ] φηλώσας ἐμέ.
ἀλλ’ οἴχεται μὴν κ̣ἀστ..[
*30*τ̣ὰ σὰ σκοτώσας ὄμμ̣[α

τ̣αῦτ’ οὐκέτ’ ἴδρ̣ις εἰμ[ὶ] δειν̣[
εἰ δεινά· πῶς γὰρ οὐχ; ὁ....[
σεμνὰς τραπέζας ἐν δόμοι[ς
ὃ δ’ ἀμφὶ χεῖρα παρθέν̣[ῳ
35 Ἰοῖ δι’ οἴκων οἴχεται σ̣.[
κόρης δὲ μυκτὴρ κρᾶτ.[
ἐκβουτυποῦται κα..[
φύει κάρα τ̣αυρ̣ῷ[.]̣˘.[
αὐχὴν ἐπ’ ὤμοι̣[ς
40 ποδῶν δὲ χηλ[αὶ
κροτοῦσι θράν̣[
γυνὴ λέαινα π.[
ἦσται λινε̣ργ[
τοιαῦτα.Ⳋ[
45 ὁ ξεῖνος α..[

ΧΟ. ἄφθογγός εἰ̣μ̣[ι
ἑ̣.[....]̣˘ε̣.[.].[
.κ̣.[
ὁ ξεῖνος ουθυ̣...[
*50*ἄ̣π̣ιστα το.....[
ἰώ, Γᾶ, θεῶν μᾶτερ
ἀξύνετ..[
ὁ πολυφάρμ̣[ακος
κάρβανος αἰθὸς .̣ [
55 ὁ μὲν ε.[
ὁ δ’ αἰολωπὸν α.[
...
[ ]...[ ]...ν̣..[
[].ς ἔχ’ αὐτόν, ὦ ἰού ἰού [

[ ]..[

[]

[]

[]ᾳν
[].απαξ

[]

[] ϛύρ̣ιγγο̣[ς] δ̣ὲ̣ κ̣λ̣ύω
[ς]ταθ̣μου[..].[.]..[..]...ϛ
[]..τ̣η̣γ̣[..]σιν βο̣ῳ̣[
[].

[]

[]

[ ]πο̣δίζεται
[ ]ε̣ρ̣ῳ
[ ]γ̣
‹ΧΟ.› πολὺ πο̣λ̣υ̣ιδρίδας
ὅτις ὅδε προτέρ̣ων
ὄνομ’ εὖ σ’ ἐθρόει,
τὸν Ἀϊδοκ̣υνέας
σκότ̣ον ἄ‹β›ροτον ὑπαί̣.
τὸν Διὸς μὲν οὖν ἐρώτων ἄ[γγ]ελον, μέγαν τρόχιν.
ε̣ἰ̣κ̣άσαι πάρεστιν Ἑρμῆν π̣[ρὸ]ϛ τὰ σὰ ψοφήματα.
αὐτὸγ̣ ε̣ἶπ̣ας, αὐτόγ̣, ὅϛ μ̣ο̣ι δεῦρ’ ἀνέστρεψεν πόδα.
δευτέρους πόνους ἔοικας πρὶν μύσαι κενοὺς ἐλᾶν.
‹ΧΟ.› ὠή· ἐσορᾷς
ε̣ι̣ϛ̣τ̣ογ̣α̣..†π̣όδ’ ἔχειν,
μανία τάδ̣ε κλύειν·
ϛὺ γὰρ οὖν, Ζεῦ, λόγῳ̣γ̣
κακὸς εἶ π̣ί̣ϛ̣τ̣ε̣ῳϛ̣
.....θεοβ..[
[.....].ουβ.[.....]η πορπ̣αφόρος
ψ̣ιθυραν μάλ’ αἰολα[ν].
πάγ̣τα μηχανᾷ̣ τὸ Δῖον ὡσ[
‹ΧΟ.› ἦ ῥα τ̣άχα Διὸς α̣ὖ̣,
Διὸς ἄρα λάτρις ὅδε;
ἐπί με πόδα νέμει.

ἔχε με· πόδα νέμει.
ἐμὲ χερακονιει†
μέγα δέος ἀραβεῖ.
40 τῶν ἐναντίων τὸ τάρβ[ος
τοῦ κάτω Διὸς φαλαγγ[
δωμάτων γ’ εἰ μὴ ‘πελᾶ[
ποῦ δὲ χρὴ πόδα στατίζε[ιν
προστι...σ φόνον βλέπ[
45 μη.....ωκ’ ἀγῶνο[ς
μὴ λέγ’ α... ἐκ κορύνησ [
οἴζομαι λα.....ριμ[

.....[.....]..[

...
[ ]..τᾳι ποδὶ
[ ]...ωι..ρωι
50 [ ]νοιπτ[
[ ]...δετουσ ρ...
[ ].υ.... τεπι.ατης
[ ].[..]....ο.[
[ ]...τα.[
55 [ ]...[.]νυν πετ[

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]αριστε[
60 [ ].....
[ ] ἄρισ[τ]α δ’ οὐ
15 [ ]. ἐξηῦρον ὠμότητα τ[
[ ]πησομ.....κ...τ.[
[ ]ον δοντ’ ἀλεύσομεν θο[
[ ].αι χρησε..ζεσ...κ.[
[ ]αρευν.. ἡ φύσασα γῆ
20 [ ]οντι πείθεσθαι καλῶς

[ ] ταῦτα· μὴ λέξῃς πλέω.
[εἶ]πον Ζηνὸς αἰᾴξαι λάτρι[ν
[ ] πάρεστιν Ἰνάχῳ λόγ[
[ ] ὀλίγον ἰσχύεις ὅμ[ως
25 [ ]... ḍυṇṭọṣṭ[
[ ].ẹṣανḍṛ[
[ ]ṭọ..[
...
[]..[..]...ṭᾳς
[]..... ḷάτρ̣ιν̣
[]....ọ̣ καḷῶ̣ς
30 [ ]...[.].
...

ΧΟ. Ἴναχε νᾶτορ, παῖ τοῦ κρηνῶν
5 πατρὸς Ὠκεανοῦ, μέγα πρεσβεύων
Ἄργους τε γύαις Ἥρας τε πάγοις
καὶ Τυρσηνοῖσι Πελασγοῖς
ῥεῖ γὰρ (sc. ὁ Ἴναχος) ἀπ’ ἄκρας
Πίνδου Λάκμου τ’ ἀπὸ Περραιβῶν
εἰς Ἀμφιλόχους καὶ Ἀκαρνᾶνας,
10 μίσγει δ’ ὕδασιν τοῖς Ἀχελῴου
5 ἔνθεν ἐς Ἄργος διὰ κῦμα τεμὼν
ἥκει δῆμον τὸν Λυρκείου

ΕΡΜΗΣ· γυνὴ τίς ἥδε, συλὰς Ἀρκάδος κυνῆς;
Πλούτωνος (i. e. Πλούτου) δ’ ἐπείσοδος
πάνδοκος ξενόστασις
ἡ μὲν σιπύη μεστή ‘στι λευκῶν ἀλφίτων,
οἱ δ’ ἀμφορῆς οἴνου μέλανος ἀνθοσμίου.
ἅπαντα δ’ ἡμῖν ἀργυρίου καὶ χρυσίου
τὰ σκευάρια πλήρη ‘στιν, ὥστε θαυμάσαι.
810 τὸ φρέαρ δ’ ἐλαίου μεστόν· αἱ δὲ λήκυθοι
μύρου γέμουσι, τὸ δ’ ὑπερῷον ἰσχάδων.

ὀξὶς δὲ πᾶσα καὶ λοπάδιον καὶ χύτρα
χαλκῆ γέγονε· τοὺς δὲ πινακίσκους τοὺς σαπροὺς
τοὺς ἰχθυηροὺς ἀργυροῦς πάρεσθ’ ὁρᾶν·
815 ὁ δ’ ἰπνὸς γέγον’ ἡμῖν ἐξαπίνης ἐλεφάντινος.
στατῆρσι δ’ οἱ θεράποντες ἀρτιάζομεν
χρυσοῖς· ἀποψώμεσθα δ’ οὐ λίθοις ἔτι
ἀλλὰ σκοροδίοις ὑπὸ τρυφῆς ἑκάστοτε
σιροὶ κριθῶν
ξανθὰ δ’ Ἀφροδισία λάταξ
πᾶσιν ἐπεκτύπει δόμοις
εὐδαίμονες οἱ τότε γέννας
ἀφθίτου λαχόντες
θείας
τραχὺς ᾧ χελώνης κέρχνος ἐξανίσταται
βοῦ
... ἐπιτήδειός γ’ ἂν ἦν (Lamius,
vir πένης καὶ ἀπὸ ξυλοφορίας ζῶν)
80 τὴν τοῦ Πανόπτου διφθέραν ἐνημμένος
εἴπερ τις ἄλλος βουκολεῖν τὸ δήμιον
ἐπήνεσ’· ἴσθι δ’, ὥσπερ ἡ παροιμία,
ἐκ κάρτα βαιῶν γνωτὸς ἂν γένοιτ’ ἀνήρ
τοιόνδ’ ἐμὸν Πλούτων’ ἀμεμφείας χάριν
πατὴρ δὲ ποταμὸς Ἴναχος
τὸν ἀντίπλαστον νόμον ἔχει κεκμηκότων
καὶ σὰς χυτρύνων λάρος {εὖτατ’ ἐπὶ κῦμα} ἐκ ῥοὰς ἐπώμασα
λάρος ἀνὴρ†
πάντα δ’ ἐρίθων ἀραχνᾶν βρίθει
ἐπίκρουμα χθονὸς Ἀργείας
κυαμόβολον δικαστήν
⏑̆⏑ χειμῶνι σὺν παλινσκίῳ
ἀναιδείας φάρος
ἀελλόθριξ
ἀλωπός
ἄναντα
κημός
στολοκρατές

INΩ

ΙΞΙΩΝ

δίψιον

ΙΟΒΑΤΗΣ

κα[ὶ] νῷν τι σῆμα λαμπρὸν ἐνδεῖξαι βίου
τὸν Ἅϊδαν γὰρ οὐδὲ γῆρας οἶδε φιλεῖν
ἀφύλλωτον πέτραν

ΙΟΚΑΣΤΗ

ΙΟΚΛΗΣ vide ΟΙΚΛΗΣ

ΙΠΠΟΔΑΜΕΙΑ vide ΟΙΝΟΜΑΟΣ

ΙΠΠΟΝΟΥΣ

ἐξ Ὠλένου γῆς φορβάδος κομίζομαι
πρὸς ταῦτα κρύπτε μηδέν· ὡς ὁ πάνθ’ ὁρῶν
καὶ πάντ’ ἀκούων πάντ’ ἀναπτύσσει χρόνος
σωτηρίας γὰρ φάρμακ’ οὐχὶ πανταχοῦ
βλέψαι πάρεστιν, ἐν δὲ τῇ προμηθίᾳ ...
ἀπαλέξασθαι
ἀπαρθένευτος

ΙΦΙΓΕΝΕΙΑ

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ (ad Clytaemnestram de Achille)·
σὺ δ’, ὦ μεγίστων τυγχάνουσα πενθερῶν
ὀξηρὸν ἄγγος οὐ μελισσοῦσθαι πρέπει
νόει πρὸς ἀνδρὶ χρῶμα πουλύπους ὅπως
πέτρᾳ τραπέσθαι γνησίου φρονήματος
τίκτει γὰρ οὐδὲν ἐσθλὸν εἰκαία σχολή
ἀκρουχεῖ
βασίλη
πύνδαξ (de capulo)
ὕποφρος

ΙΦΙΚΛΗΣ

ΙΧΝΕΥΤΑΙ ΣΑΤΥΡΟΙ

‹ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ·› [ ]σ[
[ ]κ̣ιο[
[ ]π̣ειτα[
[ἐ]πεσσύθ[ην
x[ ]γ[..]λ̣[
[ ]ω̣[
[ca. 18 ll.]ν̣ ἀγγέλλω [β]ροτο[ῖς
[ca. 19 ll.]χνοῦμα̣ι τελεῖ[ν
[ca. 19 ll. ἀ]π̣όπροθεν·
10 [....]ο̣ν[.....]λ̣οφον φρενὶ
[....]τα[..... β]ο̣ῦ̣σ̣ ἀμολγάδας
[...]λ̣ουσ[.....]α πορτίδων
[ἄπα]γ̣τα φρ̣[οῦδα .....]ν ἰχνοσκοπῶ
[λαθ]ραῖ̣’ ἰόν[τ.....βου]στάθμου κάπης
15 [...]γ̣ῶς τεχνη̣.[..... ἐ]γὼ οὐκ ἂν ᾠόμην
[οὔτ’ ἂ]ν θεῶν τιν[‘ οὔτ’ ἐφημ]έρων βροτῶν
[δρᾶς]αι̣ τόδ’ ἔργ[ον ...] πρὸς τόλμαν πεσεῖν.
[.....]’ οὖν ἐπείπερ̣ [..]θ̣ον ἐκπλαγεὶς ὄκνῳ
[σκοπ]ῶ, ματεύω, παντελὲς κήρυγμ’ ἔχων
20 [θεοῖ]ς βροτοῖς τε μηδέν’ ἀγνοεῖν τάδε.
[.....]υθ̣ίᾳ̣ γὰρ ἐμμανὴς κυνηγετῶ·
[.....]ων δ’ ἐπῆλθ[ο]ν φ[ῦ]λ̣ᾳ̣ τ[οῦ] παντὸς στρατ[οῦ
[.....]τ̣ισ[ca. 20 ll.].[

desunt versus quattuor
[ ]λ̣[
[ ].[.]ισ..[
30 [ ]α Θεσσαλῶν
[ ]Βοιωτίας τε γ[ῆς
[ ]τ̣αδ[.(.).]γ̣[

deest versus unus
[.....]ς Δωρικῃ[
35 [.....]τον’ ἐνθ̣[
[.....]ᾐκω ξυμ̣[.]α̣.[
[..... Κυλ]λήνης τε δυ[ς
[.....].ε χῶρον, ἐς δ’ ὑλ̣[
[.....ποι]μὴν εἴτ’ ἀγρωστῃ̣[
40 μαριλοκαυτῶν ἐν λόγῳ̣ παρ[
[.....]είων νυμφογεννή[τ
[.....]ι̣ τίς ἐστι, πᾶσιν ἀγγέλ[λω
[....].ρα τοῦ Παιῶνος ὅστις α[
[....]. τὸ χρῆμα, μισθός ἐσθ’ ὁ κε̣[ίμενος.
45 ‹ΣΙΛΗΝΟΣ·› [....]σ̣ου φώνημα τὼς ἐπέκλυον
[βοῶ]ντος ὀρθίοισι σὺν κηρύγμασ[ιν,
[ς]π̣ουδῇ τάδ’, ἢ πάρεστι πρεσβύτη[ι
[ς]οί, Φοῖβ’ Ἄπολλον, προσφιλὴς εὐε[ργέτης
θέλων γενέσθαι τῷ̃δ’ ἐπεσσύθην δρ̣[ό]μ̣ῳ̣[ι,
50 ἄν πως τὸ χρῆμα τοῦτό σοι κυνηγ[έ]σω.
τ[ὸ] γὰρ̣ γέ[ρα]ς μοι κείμενον χρ[υ]σ̣ο̣[ς]τεφὲς̣
μά[λι]στ’ ἐπ̣[.....]α̣ισ[..]ρ̣όσθεσ.[.....]ν.
παῖδας δε.[..]σ̣ ὅσσοισι̣[...]α̣ῖ̣σε[.]βλ̣[..]ῳ̣[
.[.....]’ [.]ι̣ εἴπερ ἐκτε[λ]εῖς ἄπε[ρ] λέγεις
55 ‹ΑΠ.› [..... δ]ῴ̣σ̣ω· μοῦνον ἐμπ[έδου τ]άδ̣ε̣.
‹ΣΙ.› τα̣[.....]οι· σὺ δ’ ἐμπέδου̣ [δόσι]ν.
‹ΑΠ.› [.....]ρε̣ῖ̣ ὅστι[ς] ἔ[ς]θ’· ἐ̣τ̣[οῖμ]α δ̣[έ.
‹ΣΙ.› π̣[.....]ισυ̣ι̣[.]ε[.]ζητ[
‹ΑΠ.› φ[.....]σ̣θ̣οσ[
60 deest versus unus
‹ΑΠ.› [...]τ̣ω[
‹ΣΙ.› τί τοῦτο; πῶ[σ.....]ε̣ις;
‹ΑΠ.› ἐλεύθερος συ[.....]ων.

ΧΟ(ΡΟΣ) ΣΑΤΥ(ΡΩΝ)· ἴθ’ ἄγε δ̣[non plus 16 ll.]
65 πόδα βά[.....]ν
ἀπαπαπ[non plus 15 ll.]
ὢ ὤ, σέ τοι [non plus 14 ll.]

ἔπιθι κλωπ[non plus 13 ll.]
ὑπόνομα κ[non plus 15 ll.]
διανύτων ό[non plus 14 ll.]
πατρικὰν γῆ̣ρ[υν non plus 12 ll.]
πῶς πᾷ̣ τὰ λάθρι[α non plus 9 ll.]
κλέμματα ποσσι.[non plus 8 ll.]
εἴ̆ πως, ἂν τύχω, πο.[non plus 8 ll.]
πατρί τ’ ἐλεύθερον β[..]..μετ[.]
ξὺν ἅμα θεὸ̣ς ὁ φίλος ἀ̣ν̣έτω
πόνους, προφήνας ἀ̣ρ̣ί̣ζ̣ηλα
χρυσοῦ πα[ρ]αδείγματα.

ΣΙ. θεὸς Τύχη [κ]αὶ δαῖμον ἰθυντήριε,
τυχ[ε]ῖν με πράγ̣ο̣ῦ̣ς̣ οὗ̆ δράμημ’ ἐπείγεται,
λείαν, ἄγραν, σύλησ̣ιν ἐκκυνηγέσαι
Φ[ο]ίβου κλ[ο]παίας βοῦς ἀπεστερημένο[υ.
[τ]ῶν εἴ̆ τις ὀπτήρ ἐστι[ν] ἢ κατήκοος,
[ἐ]μοί τ̣’ [ἃ]ν [ε]ἴ̆η προσφιλὴ[ς] φράσας τόδε
[Φοίβῳ τ]’ ἄνακτι παντε̣λ̣ὴς εὐεργ[έ]τ̣ης.
[.....]ᾳ̣[..]τ̣[..]σι̣σ̣ουλο[..]..ᾳ̣μᾳ̣[
μηνυ[
‹ΧΟ.› ἰὼ ῳ̣[
ϋηῳ̣[
δ’ οὐδ̣[
‹ΣΙ.› φησίν τις; .[
ἔ̣οικεν ἤδη κ[
ἄγ’ εἶ̣α δὴ πᾶ̣ς̣ ..[
ῥινηλατῶν ὀσμ[
αὔρας ἐάν πῃ πρ[non plus 15 ll.]
διπλοῦς ὀκλάζω[ν .....]ῳ
ὕποσμος ἐν χρῷ̃ .[non plus 15 ll.]
οὕτως ἔρευναν καὶ π[.....].
ἅπαντα χρηστὰ κα[ὶ .....]λειν.
‹ΧΟ.› - θεὸς θεὸς θεὸς θεός· ἔα [ ]
ἔχειν ἔοιγμεν· ἴσχε, μὴ̣ σ̣υ̣ρ̣[...].τει.
- ταῦτ’ ἔστ’ ἐκεῖνα· τῶν βοῶν τ[ὰ] βή̣ματα.

- σίγ[α]· θεός τις τὴν ἀποι[κία]ν ἄγει.
- τί δρῶμεν, ὦ τᾶν; ἢ τὸ δέον [..]ήνομεν;
105 - τί; τοῖσ[ι] ταύτῃ πῶς δοκεῖ;
- δοκεῖ πάνυ·
σαφῶ[ς γ]ὰρ αὔθ' ἕκαστα σημαίνει τάδε.
ἰδοὺ ἰδού·
καὶ τοὐπίσημον αὐτὸ τῶν ὁπλῶν πάλι[ν.
ἄθρει μάλα.
110 - αὖτ' ἐστι τοῦτο μέτρον [ἐ]κμε[...].[.].ο[.].[
- χ[ώ]ρει δρόμῳ καὶ τα[.....].ν ἔχου
[...]ογμ[.....].[.....]μενος
ροίβδημ' ἐάν τι τῶν [.....]. οὖς [
- οὐκ εἰσακούῳ...[....]στου φθ[έγ]ματος.
115 ἀλλ' αὐτὰ μὴν ἴχ[νη τε] χὠ στίβος τάδε
κείνων ἐναργῆ τῶν β[ο]ῶν μαθεῖν πάρα.
ἔα μάλα·
παλινστραφῆ τοι γαὶ μὰ Δία τὰ βήματα
εἰς τοὔμπαλιν δέδορκεν· αὐτὰ δ' εἴσιδε.
120 τί ἐστὶ τουτί; τίς ὁ τρόχος τοῦ τάγματ[ος;
εἰσ τοὐπίσω τὰ πρόσθεν ἥλλακται, τὰ δ' αὖ
ἐναντί' ἀλλήλοισι συμβ[εβλη]μένα·
δεινὸς κυκησμὸς εἶχ[ε τὸν βοη]λάτην.
‹ΣΙ.› τίν' αὖ τέχνην σὺ τήν[δ' ἄρ' ἐξ]ῆυρες, τίν' αὖ,
125 πρόσπαιον ὧδε κεκλιμ[ένος] κυνηγετεῖν
πρὸς γῆ; τίς ὑμῶν ὁ τρόπος; οὐχὶ μανθάνω·
[ἐ]χῖνος ὥς τις ἐν λόχμῃ κεῖσαι πεσών,
[ἤ] τις πίθηκος κύβδ' ἀποθυμαίνεις τινί.
[τ]ί ταῦτα; ποῦ γῆς ἐμάθετ'; ἐν πο[ί]ῳ τόπῳ;
*130*σ[η]μήνατ'· οὐ γὰρ ἴδρις εἰμὶ τοῦ τρόπου.
‹ΧΟ.› ὔ [ὐ] ὔ ὖ.
‹ΣΙ.› τ[ί.....] τίνα φοβῇ; τίν' εἰσορᾷς;
τ[ί.....]ις; τί ποτε βακχεύεις ἔχων;
α[.....]. κέρχν[ο]ς ἱμείρει[ς] μαθεῖν
135 τ[ί.....] σιγᾶτ', ὦ πρὸ τοῦ [.....]ατοι;
‹ΧΟ.› σ[non plus 9 ll.]
‹ΣΙ.› τ[.....]ναπονοσ[...]εισεχων.
‹ΧΟ.› ἄ[κουε δή.
‹ΣΙ.› καλῶς ἀκούσ[ομ' οὐδεν]ὸς φωνὴν κλύων.
140 ‹ΧΟ.› ἐμ[ο]ὶ πιθοῦ.

‹ΣΙ.› ἐμ[.]δί̣σ̣[.....].ῶς ὀνήσετε.
‹ΧΟ.› ἄκουσον αὐτὸ̣σ̣ ϙῦ̣[ν, πά]τε̣ρ̣, χρόνον τινὰ
οἵῳ πλαγέντες ἐνθάδ’ ἐξενίσμεθα
ψόφῳ, τὸν οὐδε[ὶ]ς π̣[ώπο]τ’ ἤκουσεν βροτῶν.
145 ‹ΣΙ.› τί μοι ψ[ό]φον; φοβ[...]. κα[.] δειμαίνετε
μάλθης ἄναγνα σῴ[μα]τ̣’ ἐκμεμαγμένα
κάκιστα θηρῶν ὀνθ̣[..]ν [π]ά̣σ̣η̣ σκιᾷ̣
φόβον βλέποντες, πάν[τα] δειματούμενοι,
ἄνευρα κἀκ̣όμιστα κἀ̣γε[λε]ύθερα
150 διακονοῦντες, σῴ̣ματ’ εἰ̣[ς]ιδ[ε]ῖ̣ν̣ μόνον
κ̣α̣[ὶ γ]λ̣ῶ̣σσα κα[ὶ] φάλητες. εἰ̣ δέ που δέῃ,
π̣ι̣σ̣τ̣οὶ λόγοισιν ὄντες ἔργα φεύγετε,
τοιοῦ̣[δ]ε πατρός, ὦ̃ κάκιστα θηρίων,
οὖ̃ πόλλ’ ἐφ’ ἥβης μνήματ’ ἀνδρείας ὕπο
155 κ[ε]ῖται παρ’ οἴκοις νυμφικοῖς ἠσκημένα,
οὐκ εἰς φυγὴν κλίνοντος, οὐ δειλ[ο]υμένου,
οὐδὲ ψόφοισι τῶν ὀρειτρόφων βοτῶν
[π]τήσσοντος, ἀλλ’ α[ἰχ]μαῖσιν ἐξει[ρ]γασμένου
[ἃ] νῦν ὑφ’ ὑμῶν λάμ[πρ’ ἀ]π̣ορρυπαίνεται
160 [ψ]όφῳ νεώρει κόλακ[ι] ποιμένων π[ο]θέν.
[..].η φοβεῖσθε παῖδες ὡς πρὶν εἰσιδεῖν,
πλοῦτον δὲ χ[ρ]υσ̣όφαντον ἐξαφίε̣τε,
ὃν Φοῖβος ὑμῖν εἶ̣πε κ[ἀ]νεδέξατο,
καὶ τὴν ἐλευθέρωσιν ἣν κατ̣ήνεσ̣εν
165 ὑμῖν τε κἀμοί· ταῦτ’ ἀφέντες εὔδετε.
εἰ μὴ ‘νανοστήσαντες ἐξιχνεύσε[τε
τὰς βοῦς ὅπῃ βεβᾶσι καὶ τὸν βουκόλο[ν,
κλαίοντες αὐτῇ δειλίᾳ̣ ψοφή̣[ς]ετε.
‹ΧΟ.› πάτε̣ρ̣, παρὼν αὐτός με συμποδηγέτε[ι,
170 ἵν’ εὖ κατείδῃς εἴ̣ τίς ἐστι δειλία·
γνώσῃ̣[ι] γὰρ αὐτός, ἂν παρῇ̣ς, οὐδὲν λέγω[ν.
‹ΣΙ.› ἐγὼ πα[ρ]ὼν αὐτός σε προσ̣βιβῶ λόγῳ̣,
κυ̣ν̣ο̣ρ̣τικὸ̣ν σύριγμα διακαλούμεν[ος.
ἀλλ’ εἶ̣’ [ἐ]φίστω τριζύγης οἴμου βάσιν·
175 ἐγὼ δ’ ἐν [ἔ]ρ̣γοις παρμένων σ’ ἀπευθυνῶ.

ΧΟ. ὖ ὖ ὖ, ψ ψ, ἆ ἆ. λέγ’ ὅ τι πονεῖς.
τί μάτην ὑπέκλαγες, ὑπέκριγες,
ὑπό μ’ ἴδες; ἔχ̣ε̣ται
ἐν πρώτῳ τίς ὅδε τροπ[
180 ἔχει. ἐλήλυθεν, ἐλήλ[υθεν.
ἐμὸς εἶ, ἀνάγου.
δευτέρῳ τίς ὅδε .[....].της
ὁ Δρ̣άκις, ὁ Γράπις, [non plus 6 litt.]
[Ο]ὐρίας, Οὐρίας, ᾳ̣δ̣[.....]κεις
185 παρέβης· Μεθυ[non plus 11 litt.]
ὅ τι ποτεφερε[.....].ι̣[.]ν
ἔποχον ἔχει τι[non plus 13 litt.]
στίβος ὀδενε.[non plus 12 litt.]
Στράτ̣ι̣ο̣ς̣, Στράτ̣[ιος .....]υ̣[..]
190 δεῦρ’ ἔπου· τ[.]δρ̣[ ]
ἔνι β[ο]ῦς, ἔνι πονο̣[
μὴ μεθῇ κρ[.]κι.[
ο̣ὐχὶ καλ[ὸ]ν ἐ̣π̣ι̣δ[
ὅδε γ’ ἀγαθὸς ὁ Τρε[
195 κατὰ νόμον ἔπετα[ι
ἐφέπου, ἐφέπου μ.[
ὀπποποῖ· ἆ μιαρέ, γε̣[
ἦ τάχ’ ὁπόταν ἀπίη[ις
ἀπελεύθερος ὢν ολ.[
200 ἀλλὰ μὴ παραπλακ[
ἔπ[ι]θ’ [ἔ]πεχ’ εἴσιθ’ ἴθ̣ι[
τ[.]δε πλάγιον ἔχομ̣[εν
πάτερ, τί σ̣ιγᾷς; μῶν ἀληθ[ὲς εἴπομεν;
οὐ[κ ε]ἰσακο[ύε]ις; ἦ κεκώφη[σαι
205 ‹ΣΙ.› ἔ̣ᾳ.
‹ΧΟ.› τί ἔ̣σ̣τ̣ι̣ν;
‹ΣΙ.› οὐ μενῶ.
‹ΧΟ.› μέν’, ε[ἰ] θέλεις.
‹ΣΙ.› οὐκ ἔστιν. ἀλλ’ αὐτὸς σὺ ταῦ̣θ̣’ ὅπ̣η θέλεις
ζήτει τε κἀξίχνευε̣ καὶ πλού[τ
τὰς βοῦς τ̣ε κα[ὶ] τὸν χρυσὸν [ ]ε[.]
μὴ πλε̣ι̣σ̣τ̣[..]ε̣τι.[.].[..]ᾳ̣σ̣[ ] χρόνον.
210 ‹ΧΟ.› ἀλλ’ οὔ τι μ̣[...]μ[

οὐδ’ ἐξυπ̣ελθ̣[εῖ]ν τ[ ]φως
εἰδῶμεν ὅσ̣[τις].[
ἰ̣ὼ γ.[
φθέγμ’ ἀφύσεις [.....]ου
215 [.]η̣δ̣[
θ̣ο̣[..]όμοισιν ὀλβίσ̣η̣ς.
ὀ[..]ῦ φαν.[..]α̣ιτοισιν. ἀλλ’ ἐγὼ τάχα
φ[έρ]ω̣ν κ̣τ̣ύ[π]ο̣ν πέδορτον ἐξαναγκάσω
π̣[η]δήμ̣ασιν κραιπνοῖσι καὶ λακτίσμασιν
220 ὦ̣[ς]τ̣’ εἰσακοῦσαι κεἰ λίαν κωφός τις ᾖ̃.
‹ΚΥΛΛΗΝΗ·› θῆρες, τί̣ [τό]νδε χλοερὸν ὑλώδη πάγον
ἔ̣ν̣[θ]ηρο̣ν ὡρμήθητε σὺν πολλῇ̃ βοῇ̃;
τίς ἥδε τέχνη; τ̣ίς μετάστασις πόνων,
οὓς πρόσθεν εἶ̃χες δεσπότ̣η̣ χάριν φέρων,
225 υ..ι̣νος αἰεὶ νεβρίν̣η̣ καθημμέν̣[ο]ς
δορᾷ̃ χερ[ο]ῖ̃ν τ̣ε̣ θ̣ύ̣ρ̣σ̣[ο]ν̣ εὐπαλῆ φέρων
ὄπισθεν εὐίαζες ἀμφὶ τὸν θεὸν
σὺν ἐγγόνοις νύμφαισι καὶπόλων ὄχλῳ;
νῦν δ’ ἀγνοῶ τὸ χρῆμα· ποῖ στροφαὶ νέ̣α̣ι
230 μανιῶν στρέφουσι; θαῦμα γὰρ κατέκλ̣[υ]ο̣ν
ὁμοῦ πρέπον κέλευμά πως κυ̣ν̣η̣γετ[ῶ]ν
ἐγγὺς μολόντων θηρὸς εὐναί[ου] τ̣ρ̣ο̣[.]ης,
ὁμοῦ δ’ αναυτ̣ι̣[..].. β̣α̣σ̣φωρ[...].(.)[..]
γλώσσης ἐτειν.[..]ι̣ς κλοπὴν .[.....].έ̣γ̣αι·
235 αὖτις δ’ α[....]τ̣[....].. μ̣ένων [.....]α
κηρυκ[..]..ι̣[.....]. κ̣ηρυγμα [
καὶ τ[α]ῦ̣τ’ ἀφεῖσα ... ποδῶν λακ[
[κ]λ̣ηδὼν ὁμοῦ πάμ̣φυρ̣[τ]’ ἐ̣γειτν[ι
[...] τ̣αῦτ’ ἂν̣ ἄλ̣λ̣ωσ̣ ἢ κλ̣[.].....μ̣[
240 [....]ω̣ν ἀκ̣ο̣[ύ]σ̣α̣σ̣’ ὦ̣δ̣ε̣ παραπεπαισμέν̣[
...[...]φ.[.]η̣[.].... γ̣ω̣ν ὑμᾶς νοσεῖ̣γ̣
νο[.....]γ̣ε̣τ̣ι̣π̣οειτ’ ἀναιτίαν.

ΧΟ. νύμφη βαθύζωνεπ..[στρ.
τοῦδ’· οὔτε γὰρ νεῖκος η[
245 δ̣ά̣[ο]υ μάχας οὐδ’ ἀξενο[

γλ[ῶ]σσαν μάταιός τ[
μή με μὴ προψαλ̣[
ἀλλ’ [εὐ]πετῶς μοι πρ[
μ’ ἐν [τ]όπ̣οις τοισ[
στως ἐγήρυσε θέσπιν αὐδά̣[ν.
‹ΚΥ.› ταῦτ’ ἔστ’ ἐκείνων νυμ̣[
καὶ τοῖσδε θηρῶν ἐκπύ[
ἀλκασμάτ̣ων δ[....].[
νύμφης· ἐμοὶ γὰ[ρ..].[
ὀρθοψάλακτον εν[.]...[..]ιν̣[
ἀλλ’ ἥσυχος πρόφαινε καὶ μ̣[..]..[
ὅτου μάλιστα πράγματος χρείαν ἔχεις.
‹ΧΟ.› τόπων ἄνασσα τῶν[δ]ε, Κυλλήνης σθένος,
ὅτου μὲν οὕνεκ’ ἦλθ[ο]ν̣, ὕστερον φράσω·
τὸ φθέγμα δ’ ἡμῖν̣ τοῦ[θ’] ὅπερ φωνεῖ φράσον
καὶ τίς ποτ’ αὐτῷ δι[α]χαράσσεται βροτῶν.
‹ΚΥ.› ὑμᾶς μὲν αὐτοὺς χρὴ τάδ’ εἰδέναι σαφῶς
ὡς, εἰ φανεῖτε τὸν λ̣[ό]γον τὸν ἐξ ἐμοῦ,
αὐτοῖσιν ὑμῖ̣[ν ζ]ημία πορίζεται·
καὶ γὰρ κέκρυπτ̣[αι] τοὔργον ἐν [θ]ε[ῶ]ν̣ ἕδραις,
Ἥραν ὅπως μ[ὴ πύ]στ[ι]ς ἴξετα[ι] λ̣όγου.
Ζ̣[εὺ]σ̣ γ[ὰρ] κρυφ[.....].ην Ἀ[τ]λαντίδος
[ ]εύσατο·
[ ]υ̣..[.]φιλας
[.....] λήθη̣ τῆς βαθυζώνου θεᾶς
[.....].ς δὲ παῖδ’ ἐφίτυσεν μόνον·
[.....] χερσὶ ταῖς ἐμαῖς ἐγὼ̣ τρέφω·
[..... γ]ὰρ ἰσχὺς ἐν νόσῳ χειμάζεται·
[.....]α̣ καὶ ποτῆτα καὶ κοιμήματα
[πρὸς σπ]αργάνοις μένουσα λικνῖτιν τροφὴν
[ἐξευθ]ετίζω νύκτα καὶ καθ’ ἡμέραν.
[παῖς δ’ α]ὔξεται κατ’ ἦμαρ οὐκ ἐπεικότα
[.....]στος, ὥστε θαῦμα καὶ φόβος μ’ ἔχει.
[.... γ]ὰρ ἐκτὸν ἦμαρ ἐκπεφασμένος
[.....]ς ἐρείδει παιδὸς εἰς ἥβης ἀκμήν,
κἀξορμενίζει κοὐκέτι σχολάζεται
βλάστη· τοιόνδε παῖδα θησαυρὸς στέγει.
[.....]τό̣σ̣[...]’ ἐστι τοῦ πατρὸς θέσει.
[..... φ]θ̣έγμα μηχανῇ βρέμ[

αφ[ca. 17 ll.]ς ἡμέρᾳ μιᾷ
καπ̣.[..].εθα[ca. 10 ll.]ανήσατο̣·
ἐξ ὑπτίας κ[ca. 11 ll.].ς ἡδονῇ
τοιόνδε θη[ca. 11 ll.]αι κατωδ[
ἔμμεστον α[ca. 10 ll.] παῖς βοῆς.
‹ΧΟ.› ἄφραστ̣[ca. 7 ll.]μαζειȿ[ἀντ.
παιδο[ ]. λεγε.[
θηρευμ[ ]ȿεθου̣[
φώνημ[ ]ον[
τονδαφ[ ]
τὼς ἐξεφ[ ]ε[
ροντ’ ἄπᾳ̣[
τος πορίζειν τοιάνδε γῆρυν.
‹ΚΥ.› μὴ νῦν ἀπίστει· πιστὰ γάρ σε προσγελᾷ θεᾶς ἔπη.
‹ΧΟ.› καὶ πῶς πίθωμαι τοῦ θανόντος φθέγμα τοιοῦτον βρέμειν;
‹ΚΥ.› πιθοῦ· θανὼν γὰρ ἔσχε φωνήν, ζῶν δ’ ἄναυδος ἦν ὁ θήρ.
‹ΧΟ.› ποῖός τις ἦν εἶδος; πρ[ο]μήκης, ἢ ‘πίκυρτος, ἢ βραχύς;
‹ΚΥ.› βραχύς, χυτροίδης, πο[ι]κίλῃ δορᾷ κατερρικνωμένος.
‹ΧΟ.› ὡς αἰέλουρος εἰκάσαι πέφυκεν ἢ τὼς πόρδαλις;
‹ΚΥ.› πλεῖȿτο̣ν με[τ]αξύ· γογγύλον γάρ ἐστι καὶ βραχυσκελές.
‹ΧΟ.› οὐδ’ ὡς ἰχνευτῇ προσφερὲς πέφυκεν οὐδ’ ὡς καρκίνῳ;
‹ΚΥ.› οὐδ’ αὖ τοιοῦτ[ό]γ̣ ἐστιν· ἀλλ’ ἄλλον τιν’ ἐξευροῦ τρόπον.
‹ΧΟ.› ἀλλ’ ὡς κ̣ε̣ρ̣άσ̣τ̣[η]ς̣ κάνθαρος δῆτ’ ἐστὶν Αἰτναῖος φυήν;
‹ΚΥ.› νῦν ἐγγὺς ἔγν[ως] ᾧ μάλιστα προσφερὲς τὸ κνώδαλον.
‹ΧΟ.› τ̣[.....] φων[..]γ̣ ἐστιν αὐτοῦ, τοὐντὸς ἢ τοὔξω, φράσον.
‹ΚΥ.› [.....]λο[..φ]ορίνη σύγγονος τῶν ὀστράκων.
‹ΧΟ.› [ca. 16 ll.]γ̣ε[...]. πόρσυνον, εἴ τι πλ̣έ̣ο̣ν ἔχεις.
‹ΚΥ.› [ca. 21 ll.]γ̣ν δ’ αὖ λύραν ὁ παῖς κ̣αλεῖ.
‹ΧΟ.› [ca. 22 ll.]. κτέανον ..ύ̣[.]τῳ τινι;
‹ΚΥ.› [ca. 23 ll.] δέρμα κ[..].τ̣.οφ[
‹ΧΟ.› [ca. 23 ll.]ο̣ν ὦδ[ε] κλαγγάνε̣ι .[
‹ΚΥ.› ἐνήλατα ξύλα ‹γε› τρίγομφα διατόρως ἐρείδεται
[ca. 24 ll.]πλεκταȿ[...]με[
[ca. 25 ll.]λάδος κ[....].[
[ca. 25 ll.]λ̣οπες δε[...]ν.[
[ca. 25 ll.]αμματω [.(.)..]χε[
[ca. 26 ll.]ον[.....]ᾳ̣ντ̣[
[ ]α.[
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[ ].ε.[
καὶ τοῦτο λύπη[ς] ἔστ’ ἄκεστρον
καὶ παραψυκ[τ]ήρ̣[ιο]ν̣
κείνῳ μόνον, χα[ί]ρει δ’ ἀλύων καί τι προσφων[
ξύμφωνον· ἐξα[ί]ρει γὰρ αὐτὸν αἰόλισμα τῆς λ[ύ]ρ̣ᾳ̣ς.
οὕτως ὁ παῖς θανόντι θηρὶ φθέγμ’ ἐμηχανήσατ[ο.

ΧΟ. ‹›οψάλακτόᾳ τις ὀμφὴ κατοιχνεῖ τόπου, στρ.
πρεπτὰ ‹¯› δὴ τ̣όνου φάσματ’ ἔγ-
χωρ’ ἐπανθεμίζει.
τὸ πρᾶγμα δ’ οὔπερ πορεύω βάδην,
ἴσθι τὸν δα[ί]μον’, ὅστις ποθ’ ὃς
ταῦτ’ ἐτεχνήσατ’ - οὐκ ἄλλος ἐστὶν κλ̣[οπεὺς
ἀντ’ ἐκείνου, γύναι, σάφ’ ἴσθι.
σὺ δ’ ἀντὶ τῶνδε μὴ χαλε-
φθῇς ἐμοὶ ‹μη›δὲ δυσφορηθῇς.
‹ΚΥ.› [.......]νησε· τίνα κλοπὴν ὠνείδισ̣[ας;
‹ΧΟ.› [ca. 14 ll.].ειρα χειμαζ̣ειν[
‹ΚΥ.› [ca. 16 ll.]ῡ̣τα φιλήτην κᾳ̣[
‹ΧΟ.› [ca. 17 ll.]αν αὐτῇ τῇ κλο[πῇ.
‹ΚΥ.› [ca. 18 ll. ε]ἴ̣ γε τἀ̣λ̣ηθ̣ῆ λ̣ἐ̣[γεις.
‹ΧΟ.› [ca. 18 ll.]αληθῆ λέγ[ω.
[ca. 19 ll.]φεναισαφ[
[ca. 19 ll.]δε βοῦς πάνυ
[ca. 19 ll.]ᾳ καθήρ[μ]ο[σε
[ca. 19 ll.]λου τεμὼν
[ca. 20 ll.]φο̣..[.]ρα[
desunt versus tres (pot. qu. duo)
[ca. 11 ll.] ἄρτι μανθάνω χρόνῳ
[ca. 12 ll.]ασκοντα τῇ ‘μ̣ῇ μωρίᾳ
[ca. 11 ll. ο]ὐδέν, ἀλλὰ παιδιᾶς χάριν.
[ca. 12 ll.]νεισεμ’ εὐδίαν ἔχων
[ca. 12 ll.]μ’ ἤ τι κερδαίνειν δοκεῖς
[ca. 12 ll.]χαζε καὶ τέρπου φρένα·
[ca. 11 ll.]ντα τοῦ Διὸς σαφεῖ λόγῳ
[ca. 11 ll.]ων ἐν νέῳ νέον λόγον·

[ca. 11 ll.] πρὸς πατρὸς κλέπτης ἔφυ
[ca. 11 ll. μ]ήτρωσιν ἡ κλοπὴ κρατεῖ.
[ca. 10 ll.]ις ἐστι, τὸν κλέπτην σκόπει
[ca. 7 ll.].αρπον τοῦδε δ’ οὐπανᾷ†δόμος
[...]ει γένος πρόσαπτε τὴν πονηρίαν
[...]. ὄντιν’ ἥκει· τῷδε δ’ οὐχ οὕτω πρέπει.
ἀ[λλ’] αἰὲν εἶ σὺ παῖς· νέος γὰρ ὢν ἀνὴρ
π[ώγ]ωνι θάλλων ὡς τράγος κνήκῳ χλιδᾷς·
παύου τὸ λεῖον φαλακρὸν ἡδονῇ πιτνάς.
[ο]ὐκ ἐκ θεῶν τὰ μῶρα καὶ γέλοια χρὴ
[χ]ανόντα κλαίειν ὕστερ’, ὡς ἐγὼ γελῶ.
‹ΧΟ.› στρέφου λυγίζου τε μύθοις, ὁποίαν θέλεις ἀντ.
βάξιν εὕρισκ’ ἀπόψηκτον· οὐ
γάρ με ταῦτα πείσεις,
‹ὅ›πως τὸ χρῆμ’ οὗτος εἰργασμένος
ῥινοκόλλητον ἄλλων ἔκαρ-
ψεν βοῶν που δοράς [γ’ ἢ] ‘πὸ τῶν Λοξίου.
[μ]ή με τᾶ[σδ’ ἐ]ξ ὁδοῦ βίβαζε·

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δηγυνη[
μανιων .[
ὦ παμπονη[ρ
[.].α τάχ’ ὀργα[
[τ]άληθὲς εἰ.[
[..]υσ γαρ[
[ὁ] παῖς κλο[π
[..]τοι πονη[
[κ]ακῶς ἀκου[
[ε]ἰ δ’ ἔστ’ ἀλη[θ
[ο]ὐ μὴ ταδ’ [
‹ΧΟ.› [
‹ΚΥ.› τ[
‹ΧΟ.› ι[
‹ΚΥ.› .[
‹ΧΟ.› [
‹ΚΥ.› δ[
‹ΧΟ.› ..[...]...[

‹ΚΥ.› πο̣λλαὶ βόες νέμουσι τ[
‹ΧΟ.› π[λ]ε̣ί̣ους δέ γ’ ἤδη νῦν [
‹ΚΥ.› τ[ί]ς, ὦ πόνηρ’, ἔχει; τί πλε̣[
‹ΧΟ.› ὁ πα̣ῖς ὃς ἔνδον ἐστὶν ἐγκεκλη[ιμένος.
‹ΚΥ.› [τὸ]ν παῖδα παῦσαι τοῦ Διὸς [
‹ΧΟ.› π[α]ύοιμ[‘ ἄ]ν [, εἰ] τὰς βοῦς τις ε[
‹ΚΥ.› ἤδ̣η με πνίγεις καὶ σὺ χα[ἰ βόες σέθεν.
‹ΧΟ.› [...]λεισε..[...]υ[. ἐ]ξελαυγ[
405 desunt versus tres, ut vid.
435 .υ...[
ἄγ’ εἶα νυ̣[ν
μυχῷ σκ[
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ἤν τ’ ἔφησ̣ .[
445 οὗτος οὐ φ[
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ὦ Λοξία, δε[
καὶ παρη[
450 τῶν [β]οῶ[ν

ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ· [.]νυ.[
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ῥικνοῦσθαι
(Mercurius) βοόκλεψ

ΙΩΝ

ἐσθλοῦ πρὸς ἀνδρὸς πάντα γενναίως φέρειν
ἐν Διὸς κήποις ἀροῦσθαι μόνον εὐδαίμονας ὅλβους
κείμενος μὲν() βουστάδας αὐλὰς ‹χερσεύει›
ἀξέστους

ΚΑΜΙΚΟΙ

ὄρνιθος ἦλθ’ ἐπώνυμος
πέρδικος ἐν κλεινοῖς Ἀθηναίων πάγοις
ἁλίας στραβήλου τῆσδε, τέκνον, εἴ τινα
δυναίμεθ’ εὑρεῖν
τὴν οὔτις ᾔδειν ἐκ θεοῦ κεκρυμμένην
πιστοί με κωχεύουσιν ἐν φορᾷ δέμας

ΚΕΡΒΕΡΟΣ

ἀλλ’ οἱ θανόντες ψυχαγωγοῦνται μόνοι

ΚΗΔΑΛΙΩΝ ΣΑΤΥΡΙΚΟΣ

καὶ δή τι καὶ παρεῖκα τῶν ἀρτυμάτων
ὑπὸ τοῦ δέατος
μαστιγίαι, κέντρωνες, ἀλλοτριοφάγοι
τοῖς μὲν λόγοις τοῖς σοῖσιν οὐ τεκμαίρομαι,
οὐ μᾶλλον ἢ ‹’ν› λευκῷ λίθῳ λευκῇ στάθμῃ
ὅ τι ἄν τι γίνηται†τὰ πάντ’ ὄνου σκιά
αὐτοκτίστους δόμους
τερθρία πνοή

ΚΛΥΤΑΙΜΗΣΤΡΑ

τὸν δὲ ἀνταῖον περιδινέοντα οὐχ ὁρᾶτε

ΚΟΛΧΙΔΕΣ

ἀπῇξε πέμφιξ Ἰονίου πέλας πόρου
κἂν ἐθαύμασας
τηλέσκοπον πέμφιγα χρυσέαν ἰδών
ἦ φῆς ὑπομνὺς ἀνθυπουργῆσαι χάριν;
ὑμεῖς μὲν οὐκ ἄρ᾽ ἦστε τὸν Προμηθέα

ΑΙΗΤΗΣ· ἦ βλαστὸς οὐκ ἔβλαστεν οὐπιχώριος;

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ· καὶ κάρτα· φρίξας γ᾽ εὐλόφῳ σφηκώματι
χαλκηλάτοις ὅπλοισι μητρὸς ἐξέδυ
ἔχοντας εὐζώνους
ἔστασαν ἱματίων ἐπιζώστρας
Ganymedes μηροῖς ὑπαίθων τὴν Διὸς τυραννίδα
καλὸν φρονεῖν τὸν θνητὸν ἀνθρώποις ἴσα
ἐπαλλαχθεῖσα
κυνάρα
νεοσφαδάστων

ΚΡΕΟΥΣΑ

ταῦτ’ ἐστὶν ἄλγιστ’, ἢν παρὸν θέσθαι καλῶς
αὐτός τις αὐτῷ τὴν βλάβην προσθῇ φέρων
ὅστις δὲ τόλμῃ πρὸς τὸ δεινὸν ἔρχεται,
ὀρθὴ μὲν ἡ γλῶσσ’ ἐστίν, ἀσφαλὴς δ’ ὁ νοῦς
καλὸν μὲν οὖν οὐκ ἔστι τὰ ψευδῆ λέγειν·
ὅτῳ δ’ ὄλεθρον δεινὸν ἀλήθει’ ἄγει,
συγγνωστὸν εἰπεῖν ἐστι καὶ τὸ μὴ καλόν

ΧΟ. οὔτε γὰρ γάμον, ὦ φίλαι,
οὔτ’ ἂν ὄλβον ἔκμετρον
ἔνδον εὐξαίμαν ἔχειν·
φθονεραὶ γὰρ ὁδοί
καὶ μή τι θαυμάσῃς με τοῦ κέρδους, ἄναξ,
ὧδ’ ἀντέχεσθαι. καὶ γὰρ οἳ μακρὸν βίον
θνητῶν ἔχουσι, τοῦ γε κερδαίνειν ὅμως
ἀπρὶξ ἔχονται, κἄστι πρὸς τὰ χρήματα
*e*θνητοῖσι τἆλλα δεύτερ’. εἰσὶ δ’ οἵτινες
αἰνοῦσιν ἄνοσον ἄνδρ’· ἐμοὶ δ’ οὐδεὶς δοκεῖ
εἶναι πένης ὢν ἄνοσος, ἀλλ’ ἀεὶ νοσεῖν
τί δ’, ὦ γεραιέ; τίς σ’ ἀναπτεροῖ φόβος;
κάλλιστόν ἐστι τοὔνδικον πεφυκέναι,
λῷστον δὲ τὸ ζῆν ἄνοσον, ἥδιστον δ’ ὅτῳ
πάρεστι λῆψις ὧν ἐρᾷ καθ’ ἡμέραν
ἄπελθ’, ἄπελθε, παῖ· τάδ’ οὐκ ἀκουστά σοι
ἀνέκτημαι
ἰσοθάνατον

ΚΡΗΤΕΣ

ΚΡΙΣΙΣ ΣΑΤΥΡΙΚΗ

καὶ δὴ φάρει τῷδ’ ὡς ἐμῷ καλύπτομαι

ΚΩΜΟΣ

ΚΩΦΟΙ ΣΑΤΥΡΟΙ

¯ κυλισθεὶς ὥς τις ὄνος ἰσόσπριος
Φρύγες (sc. Dactyli Idaei)

ΛΑΚΑΙΝΑΙ

στενὴν δ’ ἔδυμεν ψαλίδα κοὐκ ἀβόρβορον
θεοὶ γὰρ οὔποτ’, εἴ τι χρὴ βροτὸν λέγειν,
ἄρξασι Φρυξὶ τὴν κατ’ Ἀργείους ὕβριν
ξυναινέσονται· ταῦτα μὴ μάχου βίᾳ
ἐν ᾗ παύσετ’ ἀμερῶν μόχθων καὶ δανοτῆτος†
ἀνηλόκισμαι

ΛΑΟΚΟΩΝ

λάμπει δ’ ἀγυιεὺς βωμὸς ἀτμίζων πυρὶ
σμύρνης σταλαγμούς, βαρβάρους εὐοσμίας
Πόσειδον, ὃς Αἰγαίου νέμεις
πρῶνας ἢ γλαυκᾶς μέδεις εὐανέμου
λίμνας ἐφ’ ὑψηλαῖς σπιλάδεσσι στομάτων†

ΑΓΓΕΛΟΣ· νῦν δ’ ἐν πύλαισιν Αἰνέας ὁ τῆς θεοῦ
πάρεστ’, ἐπ’ ὤμων πατέρ’ ἔχων κεραυνίου
νώτου καταστάζοντα βύσσινον φάρος,
κύκλῳ δὲ πᾶσαν οἰκετῶν παμπληθίαν·
συνοπάζεται δὲ πλῆθός οἱ πόσον δοκεῖς,
οἳ τῆσδ’ ἐρῶσι τῆς ἀποικίας Φρυγῶν
πόνου μεταλλαχθέντος οἱ πόνοι γλυκεῖς
μόχθου γὰρ οὐδεὶς τοῦ παρελθόντος λόγος
καταρράκτης (de aquila dictum)

ΛΑΡΙΣΑΙΟΙ

πολὺν δ’ ἀγῶνα πάγξενον κηρύσσεται (sc. Acrisius),
χαλκηλάτους λέβητας ἐκτιθεὶς φέρειν
καὶ κοῖλα χρυσόκολλα καὶ πανάργυρα
ἐκπώματ’, εἰς ἀριθμὸν ἑξήκοντα δίς
Λάρισα μήτηρ προσγόνων Πελασγιδᾶν
καί μοι τρίτον ῥίπτοντι Δωτιεὺς ἀνὴρ
ἀγχοῦ προσῆψεν Ἔλατος ἐν δισκήματι
μηδὲ τῷ τεθνηκότι
τὸν ζῶντ’ ἐπαρκεῖν αὐτὸν ὡς θανούμενον
ὡς καὶ τύραννι πὰς ἐγγίζεται†φυγεῖν
Κρανειάτης

ΛΗΜΝΙΑΙ

ὦ Λῆμνε Χρύσης τ’ ἀγχιτέρμονες πάγοι
πάντας Σοφοκλῆς ἐν ταῖς Λημνιάσι τῷ δράματι καταλέγει τοὺς εἰς τὸ Ἀργῷον
εἰσελθόντας σκάφος, καὶ ὁ Αἰσχύλος ἐν Καβείροις (fr. 47 M.)
Φερητίδης τ’ Ἄδμητος ἠδ’ ὁ Δωτιεὺς
Λαπίθης Κόρωνος
ἅπλατον ἀξύμβλητον ἐξεθρεψάμην
ταχὺ δ’ αὐτὸ δείξει τοὔργον, ὡς ἐγώ, σαφῶς
ἀσάλπικτον ὥραν

ΜΑΝΤΕΙΣ Η ΠΟΛΥΙΔΟΣ

ΠΟΛΥΙΔΟΣ· ὦ̃ φ[.....]ν ἡλί̣ου .[
ὥς [.....]...ῡ̣ τέρψιν [
ῡ̣̃ν [.]. σκοπ̣οῦμαι χώ.[
ὡς ἄσμενός σ’ ἐσεῖδοῡ̣ .[
οὐ γᾲ̣[ρ π]ᾳ̣τὴρ ἐσεῖδε π[
[.....].θ....[.].σ[
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[.....]σ’ [
10 [.....].ω[.]η̣ῳ̣.[
[.....]..ς· γη.[
[.....]ῳ̣.[ ]π̣.[
ὀρῶ πρόχειρον Πολυΐ̈δου τοῦ μάντεως
οὐκ ἔστιν εἰ μὴ Πολυΐ̈δῳ τῷ Κοιράνου
Ξάνθας Φαμενὸς ‹καὶ› Τειρεσίου παῖς
ψυχῆς ἀνοῖξαι τὴν κεκλῃμένην πύλην
τὰς μαλλοδέτας κύστεις
πρῶτον μὲν ὄψῃ λευκὸν ἀνθοῦντα στάχυν,
ἔπειτα φοινίξαντα γογγύλον μόρον,
ἔπειτα†γῆρας λαμβάνει σφ’ Αἰγύπτιον
(de avibus quibusdam)
τοὺς γλαμυροὺς κατὰ φορβάν
οὗτοι ποθ’ ἥξει†τῶν ἄκρων ἄνευ πόνου
ἦν μὲν γὰρ οἰὸς μαλλός, ἦν δ’ ἀπ’ ἀμπέλου
σπονδή τε καὶ ῥὰξ εὖ τεθησαυρισμένη·
ἐνῆν δὲ παγκάρπεια συμμιγὴς ὀλαῖς
λίπος τ’ ἐλαίας καὶ τὸ ποικιλώτατον
5 ξουθῆς μελίσσης κηρόπλαστον ὄργανον
ὁ πρόσθεν ἐλθὼν ἦν ἀραῖός μοι νέκυς
δεῖμα προσπέοντα†ἀνταίας θεοῦ

ΜΕΛΕΑΓΡΟΣ

συὸς μέγιστον χρῆμ’ ἐπ’ Οἰνέως γύαις
ἀνῆκε Λητοῦς παῖς ἐκηβόλος θεά
στεφάνοισι κρᾶτα καταμπυκοῖς
ἰξοφόρους δρύας
κυάμῳ πατρίῳ
ἀντίβοιον
ὀπισαμβώ

ΜΕΜΝΩΝ

ΜΗΔΕΙΑ

ΜΙΝΩΣ

οὐκ ἔστι τοῖς μὴ δρῶσι σύμμαχος τύχη

ΜΟΥΣΑΙ

ψαλίδας, τιάρας καὶ σισυρνώδη στολήν
ἄβολον ἵππον

ΜΥΚΗΝΑΙΑΙ vide ΑΤΡΕΥΣ

ΜΥΣΟΙ

ὡς τοῖς κακῶς πράσσουσιν ἡδὺ καὶ βραχὺν
χρόνον λαθέσθαι τῶν παρεστώτων κακῶν
ἄμοχθος γὰρ οὐδείς· ὁ δ’ ἥκιστ’ ἔχων
μακάρτατος
Ἀσία μὲν ἡ σύμπασα κλῄζεται, ξένε,
πόλις δὲ Μυσῶν Μυσία προσήγορος
πολὺς δὲ Φρὺξ τρίγωνος ἀντίσπαστά τε
Λυδῆς ἐφυμνεῖ πηκτίδος συγχορδία
ἀφθίτους γνώμας
ἀπόβαθρα (vel ἀποβάθρα)
ἀποδρύφει
ἀπύρου
ἀστραφής

ΜΩΜΟΣ ΣΑΤΥΡΙΚΟΣ

ἄμφιον
ἀναστῦψαι
ἄνθρῳσκε
ἀποσκόλυπτε
ἅρπην

ΝΑΙ(Α)ΔΕΣ

ΝΑΥΠΛΙΟΣ ΚΑΤΑΠΛΕΩΝ et ΝΑΥΠΛΙΟΣ ΠΥΡΚΑΕΥΣ

Ζεῦ παυσίλυπε καὶ Διὸς σωτηρίου
σπονδὴ τρίτου κρατῆρος
ἀλλ’ ἀσπιδίτην ὄντα καὶ πεφραγμένον
ὡς ἀσπιδοῦχος ἢ Σκύθης τοξεύμασιν;
ἐπίκοτα
καὶ πεσσὰ πεντέγραμμα καὶ κύβων βολαί
ναύκληρον πλάτην
κάτω κρέμανται, σπίζα τὼς ἐν ἔρκεσιν

ΝΑΥΠΛΙΟΣ· οὗτος δ’ ἐφηῦρε τεῖχος Ἀργείων στρατῷ,
σταθμῶν, ἀριθμῶν καὶ μέτρων εὑρήματα
τάξεις τε ταύτας οὐράνιά τε σήματα.
κἀκεῖν’ ἔτευξε πρῶτος, ἐξ ἑνὸς δέκα
κἀκ τῶν δέκ’ αὖθις ηὗρε πεντηκοντάδας
ὃς χίλι(α) εὐθὺς ὃς†στρατοῦ φρυκτωρίαν
ἔδειξε κἀνέφηνεν οὐ δεδειγμένα.
ἐφηῦρε δ’ ἄστρων μέτρα καὶ περιστροφάς,
ὕπνου φυλάξει(ς) (στι)θόα†σημαντήρια
*j*νεῶν τε ποιμαντῆρσιν ἐνθαλασσίοις
ἄρκτου στροφάς τε καὶ κυνὸς ψυχρὰν δύσιν
ἐπεύχομαι δὲ νυκτὶ τῇ κατουλάδι
τῷ γὰρ κακῷς πράσσοντι μυρία μία
νύξ ἐστιν, εὖ παθόντα δ’ ἡμέρα φθάνει
πάγας ὑποπύρους
ἀνόρεος πόλεμος
νυμφικὸν Ἐλύμνιον
ὁλκία (πηδάλια)

ΝΑΥΣΙΚΑΑ Η ΠΛΥΝΤΡΙΑΙ

πέπλους τε νῆσαι λινογενεῖς τ’ ἐπενδύτας
ὄχημά μοι
ἐπᾶραν ἡσύχως ἀναρροιβδεῖ πάλιν

λαμπήνη

ΝΕΑΝΙΣΚΟΙ

ΝΕΟΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

ΝΙΟΒΗ

...
[ ]ε̣[

[ ].[

[ ]ο̣υσα̣. α̣ιδος ἠχώ.
‹ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝ·› ὀρ]α̃ς ἐκείνην τὴν φο̣βουμένην ἔσω,
5 τ]ὴν ἐν πιθῶνι κἀπὶ̣ κυψέλαις κρυφῇ
μό]νην κ̣αταπτήσσουσαν; ο[ὐ] τ̣ενεῖς ταχὺν
ἰὸ]ν κατ’ αὐτὴν πρὶν κεκρυμμ̣ένην λαθεῖν;
‹ΧΟ.› ἀπαπαπαῖ ἐέ.
βραχύ τι τοὐ̣ν μέσῳ διοίσει γονᾶς
10 μόρος ἀπ’ ἀρ[ς]ένῳ[ν ἀδα]μάτοις κόραις.
ἐπὶ μέγα τόδ̣ε φλ[ύει κα]κόν
...

[ ]..[

[ ].[.].[...]ε.ε̣μανιαδ[
¯].α Φοίβου τῆς θ’ ὁμο̣σπόρο[υ ˘–
] ἐ̣ξελαύνεις δωμάτων τ[¯˘–
5]αστοχίζῃ π̣λευρὸν εἰσε.[¯˘–
¯˘]...α̣ τὴν πολύστονον.[˘–
¯]εκεῖσε τῇδ’ ἐπουρίσω πόδα
[ ]..δ̣ε̣ μυχαλὰ Τάρταρα τ̣ε̣[
[π]ο̣ῖ̃ πόδα καταπτήξω;
10 ¯˘–]α̣ λ̣ί̣σσομαι, δέσποιν(α)[(˘)¯
¯˘–]α̣ι τό̣ξ̣[α] μηδέ̣ μ̣ε̣ κ̣τα[ν -
¯˘––˘ αθ]λ̣ία κόρη
[ ].μ̣α̣στ[
[ ]...ν χόλ[
15 [ ]π̣αροιθετ[
[ ].δωσω.[
[ ].νε[..]..[
...

...

[ ]..[...].[

[ἴ]ππων [
[.]ῳ γὰρ .[
[.]πισκ.[
5 [.].μαλλο.[
[.]ελεαι χ[
[..]οξυν[..]ε̣α̣[
[..]ηκε π[α]ῖ̣ς σὸς εἰς κ.[
[χ]ωρεῖ δ’ ἐπ’ αὐτὸν .[
10 [.]γ.[.]ρ̣ε̣μοι ξίφοσ..[
[ν]έη[κ]ε̣ς ἡμιλλήῳ[ατ’
[ ]κ̣ἄ̣μφω δ̣ο̣ρα̣[
...
(...)
[ ].[...].

[ ] [ ]

[ ].εν.[.]υσιαι

[ ]

5 [κ]α̣ὶ̣ λόγων ὑπέρτερον
[].ει πῶλ̣ος ὡς ὑπὸ ζυγοῦ̣
[].ο̣υμεν ἀ̣ρτίως καὶ συγγ[ον
[ ].[.] α̣ὖ φο̣β̣ῇ̣ γ̣έ̣ο̣γ̣ μ[
...
...
[ ]...ων μ.[
[ ]ο̣τοτ̣οτοτοτοτ̣ο̣τ̣[
⏑⏓] αὖ̃ τάσδ’ ὁρῶ [⏑⏓
⏑⏓]αν τηνδε̣[⏑⏑⏓
[ ].αγρ[ο]υ̣ φω[
[ ]...λ[

[ ]..[

summa papyrus deperdita
[ ].νο.[
...
...
[ ].σε̣..[
[ ].γ..αδεκ.[
[ ].ε̣.εκα...[
[ ]..π̣εισαβα.[
[ ]ων ἐν̣ πτερ̣[
[ ].ι̣ο̣σσυτον [
[]δαισεισαιμ̣α̣[
[ ].ομαιαστ[
[ ]η̣ρος παρθεν[
10 [ ]αιθεροσ.[.].[
[ ]υσα.[
ἦ γὰρ φίλη ‘γὼ τῶνδε τοῦ προφερτέρου
τῶν Νιοβιδῶν βαλλομένων καὶ θνῃσκόντων ἀνακαλεῖταί τις τὸν ἐραστήν·
ὦ ἀμφ’ ἐμοῦ στεῖλαι
δερμηστὴς ἔσθων
ἔλυμοι

ΝΙΠΤΡΑ

τὴν παρουσίαν
τῶν ἐγγὺς ὄντων

ΞΟΑΝΗΦΟΡΟΙ

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ ΑΚΑΝΘΟΠΛΗΞ

ποδαπὸν τὸ δῶρον ἀμφὶ φαιδίμοις ἔχων
ὤμοις ...;
ὤμοις ἀθηρόβρωτον ὄργανον φέρων
Δωδῶνι ναίων Ζεὺς ὁμί[ ]ος βροτῶν
τὰς θεσπιῳδοὺς ἱερέας Δωδωνίδας
νηδὺς ... ἐλαιάεσσα (de Cyclope)
εἰ μέν τις οὖν ἔξεισιν· εἰ δὲ μή, λέγε
νῦν δ’ οὔτε μ’ ἐκ Δωδῶνος οὔτε Πυθικῶν
γυ[άλων] τις ἂν πείσειεν
καὶ τὸν ἐν Δωδῶνι παῦσον δαίμον’ εὐλογούμενον

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ ΜΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΟΣ

πάντ’ οἶσθα, πάντ’ ἔλεξα τἀντεταλμένα·
μῦθος γὰρ Ἀργολιστὶ συντέμνει βραχύς
κρεκτοῖσι νόμοις
ἐμπερής
ἀμαλάψαι
θριάζειν
μαγνον†

ΟΙΚΛΗΣ

λινορραφῆ τυλεῖα
ἀλλ’ ἴθι χαίρων, καὶ πράξειας
κατὰ νοῦν τὸν ἐμόν, καί σε φυλάττοι
500 Ζεὺς Ἀγοραῖοσ

ΟΙΛΕΥΣ

ΟΙΝΕΥΣ

ΟΙΝΟΜΑΟΣ

παῖδ’ ἡ μὲν ὡς ἴ θάσσον’, ἡ δ’ ὡς ἴ τέκοι
ὅρκου δὲ προστεθέντος ἐπιμελεστέρα
ψυχὴ κατέστη· δισσὰ γὰρ φυλάσσεται,
φίλων τε μέμψιν κεἰς θεοὺς ἁμαρτάνειν
Σκυθιστὶ χειρόμακτρον ἐκκεκαρμένος

ΙΠΠΟΔΑΜΕΙΑ·
τοίαν Πέλοψ ἴυγγα θηρατηρίαν
ἔρωτος, ἀστραπήν τιν’ ὀμμάτων, ἔχει·
ᾗ θάλπεται μὲν αὐτός, ἐξοπτᾷ δ’ ἐμέ,
ἴσον μετρῶν ὀφθαλμόν, ὥστε τέκτονος
5 παρὰ στάθμην ἰόντος ὀρθοῦται κανών
διὰ ψήκτρας σ’ ὁρῶ
ξανθὴν καθαίρονθ’ ἵππον αὐχμηρᾶς τριχός
γενοίμαν αἰετὸς ὑψιπέτας,
ὡς ἀμποταθείᾱν ὑπὲρ ἀτρυγέτου
γλαυκᾶς ἐπ’ οἶδμα λίμνας
λήθουσι γάρ τοι κἀνέμων διέξοδοι
θήλειαν ὄρνιν, πλὴν ὅταν τόκος παρῇ

ΟΙΝΩΝΗ

ΠΑΛΑΜΗΔΗΣ

εὔφημος ἴσθι μοῦνον ἐξορμωμένη
οὐ λιμὸν οὗτος τῶνδ’ ἔπαυσε, σὺν θεῷ
εἰπεῖν, χρόνου τε διατριβὰς σοφωτάτας
ἐφηῦρε φλοίσβου μετὰ κόπον καθημένοις,
πεσσοὺς κύβους τε, τερπνὸν ἀργίας ἄκος;
ἄκεστρον
δρωπά

ΠΑΝΔΑΡΟΣ

ΠΑΝΔΩΡΑ Η ΣΦΥΡΟΚΟΠΟΙ

καὶ πρῶτον ἄρχου πηλὸν ὀργάζειν χεροῖν
καὶ πλῆρες ἐκπιόντι χρύσεον κέρας
τρίψει γέμοντα†μαλθακῆς ὑπ’ ὠλένης
βλιμάζειν
ἐνουρήθρα
χήλευμα

ΠΕΛΙΑΣ

ΠΗΛΕΥΣ

Πηλέα τὸν Αἰάκειον οἰκουρὸς μόνη
γερονταγωγῶ κἀναπαιδεύω πάλιν·
πάλιν γὰρ αὖθις παῖς ὁ γηράσκων ἀνήρ
τὸ μὴ γὰρ εἶναι κρεῖσσον ἢ τὸ ζῆν κακῶς
ὁμορροθῶ, συνθέλω,
συμπαραινέσας ἔχω
ἴτω δὲ Πυθιὰς βοά
βοάσομαι τἄρα τὰν ὑπέρτονον
βοάν· ἰώ, πύλαισιν ἥ τις δόμοις;
βασιλεὺς χώρας τῆς Δωτιάδος
μὴ ψεῦσον, ὦ Ζεῦ· μή μ’ ἔλῃς ἄνευ δορός
καὶ ξηραλοιφῶν εἵματος διὰ πτυχῶν
Κυκνῖτις
λιποψυχεῖν

ΠΛΥΝΤΡΙΑΙ vide ΝΑΥΣΙΚΑΑ

ΠΟΙΜΕΝΕΣ

ΕΚΤΩΡ· ἠδὺ ξανῆσαι καὶ προγυμνάσαι χέρα
βοὴν Κυκνῖτιν
οὐ χαλκός, οὐ σίδηρος ἅπτεται χροός

ΚΥΚΝΟΣ· καὶ μὴν ὑβρίζοντ’ αὐτίκ’ ἐκ βάθρων ἐλῶ,
ῥυτῆρι κρούων γλουτὸν ὑπτίου ποδός
ἑωθινὸς γάρ, πρίν τιν’ αὐλιτῶν ὁρᾶν,
θαλλὸν χιμαίραις προσφέρων νεοσπάδα,
εἶδον στρατὸν στείχοντα παραλίαν πέτραν
ἔνθ’ ἡ πάροικος πηλαμὺς χειμάζεται
πάραυλος Ἑλλησποντίς, ὡραία θέρους
τῷ Βοσπορίτῃ· τῇδε γὰρ θαμίζεται
κημοῖσι πλεκτοῖς πορφύρας φθείρει γένος
τούτοις γὰρ ὄντες δεσπόται δουλεύομεν,
καὶ τῶνδ’ ἀνάγκη καὶ σιωπώντων κλύειν
τειχέων καὶ δὴ τοὺς Ποσιδείους
θριγκοὺς ‹¯› ἀποσεισαμένη
¯] τριταῖος ὥστε πῦρ ἀφί[
κρυμὸν φέρων γναθμοῖσιν ἐξ ἀμφημέρου
λόγῳ γὰρ ἔλκος οὐδὲν οἶδά που χανόν ...
κυνὸς πελλῆς τε μηκάδος βοὸς ῥηνέων†
ἔμισ[γ’] ὅσον δὴ [π]ηλὸν ὀργάσαι ..[...]ν
ἴδεν δήπογε μηλοτρόφω ἀγενηλιτὴει τὴν τῆς Ἴδης†τριολύμπιον ἄρμα
ἀμύρους τόπους
Βερέκυντα βρόμον
Φοινικίοις γράμμασι

ΧΟ. ἰὼ βαλλήν
ἀναλῶσαι
βαρίβας

γραῖκες vel Γραῖκες
Ἵαινα
παρασάγγαι
ψό

ΠΟΛΥΙΔΟΣ vide ΜΑΝΤΕΙΣ

ΠΟΛΥΞΕΝΗ

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ·
σὺ δ’ αὖθι μίμνων που κατ’ Ἰδαίαν χθόνα
ποίμνας Ὀλύμπου συναγαγὼν θυηπόλει

ΨΥΧΗ ΑΧΙΛΛΕΩΣ·
ἀκτὰς ἀπαίωνάς τε καὶ μελαμβαθεῖς
λιποῦσα λίμνης ἦλθον, ἄρσενας χοὰς
Ἀχέροντος ὀξυπλῆγας ἠχούσας γόους
οὐ γάρ τις ἂν δύναιτο πρῳράτης στρατοῦ
τοῖς πᾶσιν εἶξαι καὶ προσαρκέσαι χάριν.
ἐπεὶ οὐδ’ ὁ κρείσσων Ζεὺς ἐμοῦ τυραννίδι
οὔτ’ ἐξεπομβρῶν οὔτ’ ἐπαυχμήσας φίλος·
βροτοῖς δ’ ἂν ἐλθὼν ἐς λόγον δίκην ὄφλοι.
πῶς δῆτ’ ἔγωγ’ ἂν θνητὸς ἐκ θνητῆς τε φὺς
Διὸς γενοίμην εὖ φρονεῖν σοφώτερος;
ἀπ’ αἰθέρος δὲ κἀπὸ λυγαίου νέφους
χιτών σ’ ἄπειρος, ἐνδυτήριον κακῶν ...
παράρυμα ποδός

ΠΡΙΑΜΟΣ

ἀφήλικες θέαμα
γλαρίδες
λατύποι
λεῖαι
χυτρίζειν

ΠΡΟΚΡΙΣ

¯ κολασταὶ κἀπιτιμηταὶ κακῶν

ΠΡΟΜΗΘΕΥΣ

ΠΤΩΧΕΙΑ

ΡΙΖΟΤΟΜΟΙ

ἡ δ’ ἐξοπίσω χερὸς ὄμμα τρέπουσ’
ὀπὸν ἀργινεφῆ στάζοντα τομῆς
χαλκέοισι κάδοις δέχεται
αἱ δὲ καλυπταὶ
κίσται ῥιζῶν κρύπτουσι τομάς,
ἃς ἥδε βοῶσ’ ἀλαλαζομένη
γυμνὴ χαλκέοις ἅμα δρεπάνοις

ΧΟ. Ἅλιε δέσποτα καὶ πῦρ ἱερόν,
τῆς εἰνοδίας Ἑκάτης ἔγχος,
τὸ δι’ Οὐλύμπου προπολοῦσα φέρει
καὶ γῆς ἀνιοῦσ’ ἱερὰς τριόδους,
στεφανωσαμένη δρυΐ καὶ πλεκταῖς
ὠμῶν σπείραισι δρακόντων
κόρον ἀϊστώσας πυρί

ΣΑΛΜΩΝΕΥΣ ΣΑΤΥΡΙΚΟΣ

τάδ’ ἐστὶ κνισμὸς καὶ φιλημάτων ψόφος·
τῷ καλλικοσσαβοῦντι νικητήρια
τίθημι καὶ βαλόντι χάλκειον κάρα
καὶ τάχ’ ἂν κεραυνία
πέμφιξ σε βροντῆς καὶ δυσοσμίας λάβοι
πέμφιγι πᾶσιν ὄψιν ἀγγελῶ πυρός
Καρικοὶ τράγοι
θῆμα

ΣΙΝΩΝ

αἰθύσσειν
ἀναιθύσσω
ἄρρητον
ἐνθρίακτος

ΣΙΣΥΦΟΣ

χαρίτων τριζύγων

ΣΚΥΘΑΙ

οὐ γὰρ ἐκ μιᾶς
κοίτης ἔβλαστον, ἀλλ’ ὁ μὲν (Apsyrtus) Νηρηΐδος
τέκνον ἄρτι βλάστεσκε, τὴν δ’ (Medeam)
Εἰδυῖα πρίν ποτ’ Ὠκεανοῦ τίκτει κόρη
κρημνούς τε καὶ σήραγγας ἠδ’ ἐπακτίας
αὐλῶνας
ἀψάλακτος
Ἀχιλλείων
βυθίζων

ΣΚΥΡΙΟΙ

Scyrus ἀνεμώδης
φιλεῖ γὰρ ἄνδρας πόλεμος ἀγρεύειν νέους
ἢ ποντοναῦται τῶν ταλαιπώρων βροτῶν,
οἷς οὔτε δαίμων οὔτε τις θεῶν νέμων
πλούτου ποτ’ ἂν νείμειεν ἀξίαν χάριν·
λεπταῖς ἐπὶ ῥοπῆσιν ἐμπολὰς μακρὰς
ἀεὶ παραρρίπτοντες οἱ πολύφθοροι
ἢ ἔσωσαν ἀκέρδαναν ἢ διώλεσαν.
[ ]. τε κἀπαινῶ βροτοὺς
[ ] χειρὶ τῇ δυστλήμονι
[πο]ρ̣σ̣ύνειν βίον
j[ ]....[
...
[]ν
[]νοιαν
[]ν
[ ]λην
...

..[

σκ[
καλω[
ἴστω γε μέν[τοι
5 λιμήν τενα[
μήτ’ ἔχθοσ̣ ο̣σ̣[
μήθ̣’ ὅστις ε̣[
ἐπεύχομα[ι
φρονουμεν̣[
10 εἰἐν· τί δ[
νῦν πᾶν κατα.[
πλοίοις Ἀχαιῶν καὶ[
ὧν εὐλαβείας οὕνεκ’ α̣.[
καθεῖμεν ἐκ τῆς ἀμφ[
15 πρὸς ἄνδρα Χαλκώδον[τα

νᾳ̣[ί]οντά που κευθμῶν[α
κεἰ πλοῦς ἔθ’ ἡμᾶς πε.[
κατῆγ’ ἀνῆγέ θ’ αὐτὸς ὃς γ[
ἦ δᾶν πρόσω γῆς τῆσδ’ αν.[
20 νῦν δ̣ὲ σ̣χολῆς ἕκατ̣ι τοὶ μ.[
γησε̣γ..[..]υμάζοντες· οἱ δε̣[
κο[.....]χ̣ουσιν̣· αυ̣ρ̣[
η[.....]ῦμεν οἷ̣ γ[
[.....]σ̣ιν̣· οὐ γὰ[ρ
25 [ ].[
...
...

].[.].[

]τολ̣[
]ερτ[
...
οὐδὲν γὰρ ἄλγος οἷον ἡ πολλὴ ζόη
ἀλλ’ εἰ μὲν ἦν κλαίουσιν ἰᾶσθαι κακὰ
καὶ τὸν θανόντα δακρύοις ἀνιστάναι,
ὁ χρυσὸς ἦσσον κτῆμα τοῦ κλαίειν ἂν ἦν.
νῦν δ’, ὦ γεραιέ, ταῦτ’ ἀνηνύτως ἔχει,
5 τὸν ἐν τάφῳ κρυφθέντα πρὸς τὸ φῶς ἄγειν·
κἀμοὶ γὰρ ἂν πατήρ γε δακρύων χάριν
ἀνῆκτ’ ἂν εἰς φῶς
ἀποστιβής
αὐτόσσυτον
ἀχρήματον vel α
εὐωριάζειν

ΣΥΝΔΕΙΠΝΟΙ vel ΣΥΝΔΕΙΠΝΟΝ

ΘΕΤΙΣ (ad Achillem)·
λιποῦσα μὲν
Νηρηΐδων ὤρουσα πόντιον χορόν
φορεῖτε, μασσέτω τις, ἐγχείτω βαθὺν
κρατῆρ’· ὅδ’ ἀνὴρ οὐ πρὶν ἂν φάγῃ καλῶς
ὅμοια καὶ βοῦς ἐργάτης ἐργάζεται
οὗτοι γένειον ὧδε χρὴ διηλιφὲς
φοροῦντα κἀντίπαιδα καὶ γένει μέγαν
γαστρὸς καλεῖσθαι παῖδα, τοῦ πατρὸς παρόν
ἀλλ’ ἀμφὶ θυμῷ τὴν κάκοσμον οὐράνην
ἔρριψεν οὐδ’ ἥμαρτε· περὶ δ’ ἐμῷ κάρᾳ
κατάγνυται τὸ τεῦχος οὐ μύρου πνέον·
ἐδειματούμην δ’ οὐ φίλης ὀσμῆς ὕπο

ΟΔ. ἤδη τὰ Τροίας εἰσορῶν ἑδώλια
δέδοικας; .....

ΑΧ. (διαγανακτεῖ καὶ ἀποπλεῖν λέγει)
.....

ΟΔ. ἐγῷδ’ ὃ φεύγεις· οὐ τὸ μὴ κλύειν κακῶς,
ἀλλ’ ἐγγὺς Ἕκτωρ ἐστίν· οὐ μένειν καλόν
ὦ πάντα πράσσων, ὡς ὁ Σίσυφος πολὺς
ἔνδηλος ἐν σοὶ πάντα χὠ μητρὸς πατήρ
λάθα Πιερίσιν στυγερὰ
κἀνήρατος· ὦ δύνασις
θνατοῖς εὐποτμοτάτα μελέων,
ἀνέχουσα βίου βραχὺν ἰσθμόν

Ἀζειῶται
βέβηλος
μάσθλης

ΣΦΥΡΟΚΟΠΟΙ vide ΠΑΝΔΩΡΑ

ΤΑΝΤΑΛΟΣ

ΧΟ. βιοτῆς μὲν γὰρ χρόνος ἐστὶ βραχύς,
κρυφθεὶς δ’ ὑπὸ γῆς κεῖται θνητὸς
τὸν ἅπαντα χρόνον
Ἑρμῆς ἐδήλου τήνδε χρησμῳδὸν φάτιν

ΤΕΥΚΡΟΣ

τοὺς δ’ ἂν μεγίστους καὶ σοφωτάτους φρενὶ
τοιούσδ’ ἴδοις ἂν οἷός ἐστι νῦν ὅδε (sc. Oileus),
καλῶς κακῶς πράσσοντι συμπαραινέσαι·
ὅταν δὲ δαίμων ἀνδρὸς εὐτυχοῦς τὸ πρὶν
μάστιγ’ ἐρείσῃ τοῦ βίου παλίντροπον,
τὰ πολλὰ φροῦδα καὶ καλῶς εἰρημένα
‹ΤΕΛΑΜΩΝ·› ὡς ἄρ’, ὦ τέκνον, κενὴν
ἐτερπόμην σου τέρψιν εὐλογουμένου
ὡς ζῶντος· ἣ δ’ ἄρ’ ἐν σκότῳ λήθουσά με
ἔσαιν’ Ἐρινὺς ἡδοναῖς ἐψευσμένον
  οὐρανοῦ δ’ ἄπο
ἥστραψε, βροντὴ δ’ ἐρράγη δι’ ἀστραπῆς
Κυχρεῖος πάγος

ΤΗΛΕΦΕΙΑ

ΤΗΛΕΦΟΣ

ἀειφόρος vel ἀείφρουρος

ΤΗΡΕΥΣ

τοῦτον δ’ ἐπόπτην ἔποπα τῶν αὐτοῦ κακῶν
πεποικίλωκε κἀποδηλώσας ἔχει
θρασὺν πετραῖον ὄρνιν ἐν παντευχίᾳ·
ὃς ἦρι μὲν φανέντι διαπαλεῖ πτερὸν
κίρκου λεπάργου· δύο γὰρ οὖν μορφὰς φανεῖ
παιδός τε χαὐτοῦ νηδύος μιᾶς ἄπο·
νέας δ’ ὀπώρας ἡνίκ’ ἂν ξανθῇ στάχυς,
στικτή νιν αὖθις ἀμφινωμήσει πτέρυξ·
ἀεὶ δὲ μίσει τῶνδ’ ἄπ’ ἄλλον†εἰς τόπον
10 δρυμοὺς ἐρήμους καὶ πάγους ἀποικιεῖ
Ἥλιε, φιλίπποις Θρῃξὶ πρέσβιστον σέβας
‹ΠΡΟΚΝΗ·› νῦν δ’ οὐδέν εἰμι χωρίς. ἀλλὰ πολλάκις
ἔβλεψα ταύτῃ τὴν γυναικείαν φύσιν,
ὡς οὐδέν ἐσμεν. αἱ νέαι μὲν ἐν πατρὸς
ἥδιστον, οἶμαι, ζῶμεν ἀνθρώπων βίον·
5 τερπνῶς γὰρ ἀεὶ παῖδας ἀνοία τρέφει.
ὅταν δ’ ἐς ἥβην ἐξικώμεθ’ ἔμφρονες,
ὠθούμεθ’ ἔξω καὶ διεμπολώμεθα
θεῶν πατρῴων τῶν τε φυσάντων ἄπο,
αἱ μὲν ξένους πρὸς ἄνδρας, αἱ δὲ βαρβάρους,
10 αἱ δ’ εἰς ἀγηθῆ δώμαθ’, αἱ δ’ ἐπίρροθα.
καὶ ταῦτ’, ἐπειδὰν εὐφρόνη ζεύξῃ μία,
χρεὼν ἐπαινεῖν καὶ δοκεῖν καλῶς ἔχειν
πολλά σε ζηλῶ βίου,
μάλιστα δ’ εἰ γῆς μὴ πεπείρασαι ξένης
ἀλγεινά, Πρόκνη, δῆλον· ἀλλ’ ὅμως χρεὼν
τὰ θεῖα θνητοὺς ὄντας εὐπετῶς φέρειν
σπεύδουσαν αὐτήν, ἐν δὲ ποικίλῳ φάρει
φιλάργυρον μὲν πᾶν τὸ βάρβαρον γένος
θάρσει· λέγων τἀληθὲς οὐ σφαλῇ ποτε
ἄνους ἐκεῖνος· αἱ δ’ ἀνουστέρως ἔτι
ἐκεῖνον ἠμύναντο ‹πρὸς τὸ› καρτερόν.
ὅστις γὰρ ἐν κακοῖσι θυμωθεὶς βροτῶν
μεῖζον προσάπτει τῆς νόσου τὸ φάρμακον,
5 ἰατρός ἐστιν οὐκ ἐπιστήμων κακῶν

ΧΟ. θνητὴν δὲ φύσιν χρὴ θνητὰ φρονεῖν,
τοῦτο κατειδότας ὡς οὐκ ἔστιν
πλὴν Διὸς οὐδεὶς τῶν μελλόντων
ταμίας ὅ τι χρὴ τετελέσθαι.
ἓν φῦλον ἀνθρώπων, μί᾽ ἔδειξε πατρὸς
καὶ ματρὸς ἡμᾶς ἀμέρα τοὺς πάντας· οὐδεὶς
ἔξοχος ἄλλος ἔβλαστεν ἄλλου.
βόσκει δὲ τοὺς μὲν μοῖρα δυσαμερίας,
τοὺς δ᾽ ὄλβος ἡμῶν, τοὺς δὲ δουλεί-
ας ζυγὸν ἔσχεν ἀνάγκας.

ΧΟ. ἀλλὰ τῶν πολλῶν καλῶν
τίς χάρις, εἰ κακόβουλος
φροντὶς ἐκτρίψει τὸν εὐαίωνα πλοῦτον;
τὰν γὰρ ἀνθρώπου ζοὰν
ποικιλομήτιδες ἆται
πημάτων πάσαις μεταλλάσσουσιν ὥραις
ζώοι τις ἀνθρώπων τὸ κατ᾽ ἦμαρ ὅπως
ἥδιστα πορσύνων· τὸ δ᾽ ἐς αὔριον αἰεὶ
τυφλὸν ἔρπει
αἴγλη
κερκίδος φωνή
λίβανος
περισ[
τουτου Σοφοκλέο[υς
θεις νιν εἰς φθορ[άν
μενται τὰ δ᾽ ἄλλα [
10 Σοφοκλέους ἐσ[τὶν ἐκ
Τηρέως δοκῶ [

ΤΡΙΠΤΟΛΕΜΟΣ

δράκοντε θαιρὸν ἀμφιπλὶξ εἰληφότε
θοῦ δ’ ἐν φρενὸς δέλτοισι τοὺς ἐμοὺς λόγους

ΔΗΜΗΤΗΡ (ad Triptol.)·
τὰ δ’ ἐξόπισθε χειρὸς ἐς τὰ δεξιὰ
Οἰνωτρία τε πᾶσα καὶ Τυρσηνικὸς
κόλπος Λιγυστική τε γῆ σε δέξεται
χρῆσται δέ σ’ ἐνθένδ’ αὖτις
et fortunatam Italiam frumento ca26 ne26 re candido
Ἰλλυρὶς γονή
Καρχηδόνος δὲ κράσπεδ’, ἣν ἀσπάζομαι
σιλφίου λειμών
καὶ Χαρναβῶντος, ὃς Γετῶν ἄρχει τὰ νῦν
ἦλθεν δὲ Δαὶς θάλεια, πρεσβίστη θεῶν
οὐδὲν ἡ τάλαινα δοῦσα τοῦ ταριχηροῦ γάρου
ἄμαλλαι
κνημοῦ μελίνης
ὀρίνδην (ἄρτον)
βρῦτον δὲ τὸν χερσαῖον οὐ δυεῖν†
ἀπυνδάκωτος οὐ τραπεζοῦται κύλιξ
εἰς ὀρθὸν φρονεῖν
ἀφράσμων
ἔλκη
Ἑστία (Γῆ)
ζευγηλάτης
Ἴαινα
ἴλη

ΤΡΩΙΛΟΣ

ἔγημεν ὡς ἔγημεν ἀφθόγγους γάμους,
τῇ παντομόρφῳ Θέτιδι συμπλακείς ποτε
τὸν ἀνδρόπαιδα δεσπότην (sc. Troilum) ἀπώλεσα
σκάλμῃ γὰρ ὄρχεις βασιλὶς ἐκτέμνουσ’ ἐμούς
πρὸς ναρὰ καὶ κρηναῖα χωροῦμεν ποτά
καταρβύλοις χλαίναις
πλήρη μασχαλισμάτων
ἐλαιοῦται θρίξ
ψεφαίας νυκτός
ἀμάσεται
τόξ’ ἀπεσκῆ
ἄπιστος
ἄσας
ἀσαρόν
ἀσόλοικον
ἔρκη
ἰαί
ἰήιος
μέλλει
ὀροσάγγαι
σακοδερμηστής

ΤΥΜΠΑΝΙΣΤΑΙ

φεῦ φεῦ, τί τούτου χάρμα μεῖζον ἂν λάβοις
τοῦ γῆς ἐπιψαύσαντα κᾆθ’ ὑπὸ στέγῃ
πυκνῆς ἀκοῦσαι ψακάδος εὐδούσῃ φρενί;
ἡμεῖς δ’ ἐν ἄντροις, ἔνθα Σαρπηδὼν πέτρα
Κόλχος τε Χαλδαῖός τε καὶ Σύρων ἔθνος
ἄδημον
κομίζεται
ἀνετῶς
ἀντιστρέφω
δράκαυλος
ἔλυμοι

ΤΥΝΔΑΡΕΩΣ

οὐ χρή ποτ’ εὖ πράσσοντος ὀλβίσαι τύχας
ἀνδρός, πρὶν αὐτῷ παντελῶς ἤδη βίος
διεκπεραθῇ καὶ τελευτήσῃ δρόμον.
ἐν γὰρ βραχεῖ καθεῖλε κὠλίγῳ χρόνῳ
*χ*πάμπλουτον ὄλβον δαίμονος κακοῦ δόσις,
ὅταν μεταστῇ καὶ θεοῖς δοκῇ τάδε.
ἀμβλυφαεῖ δ’ ὄμμ’ ὑπὸ γήρως

ΤΥΡΩ A et B

λευκὸν αὐτὴν ὦδ’ ἐπαίδευσεν γάλα
θεανὴ νόσος
ἔχθιμα
καπρομανής
μὴ σπεῖρε πολλοῖς τὸν παρόντα δαίμονα·
σιγώμενος γάρ ἐστι θρηνεῖσθαι πρέπων
τίς ὄρνις οὕτως ἕξεδρον χώραν ἔχων ...;
ῥηνοβοσκός
αὕτη δὲ μάχιμός ἐστιν ὡς κεκλημένη
σαφῶς Σιδηρώ, καὶ φρονοῦσα τοὔνομα
οὐκ οἴεται δύσκλειαν ἐκ τούτου φέρειν

ΤΥΡΩ· κόμης δὲ πένθος λαγχάνω πώλου δίκην,
ἥτις συναρπασθεῖσα βουκόλων ὕπο
μάνδραις ἐν ἱππείαισιν ἀγρίᾳ χερὶ
θέρος θερισθῇ ξανθὸν αὐχένων ἄπο,
πλαθεῖσα δ’ ἐν λειμῶνι ποταμίων ποτῶν
ἴδῃ σκιᾶς εἴδωλον αὐγασθεῖσ’ ὑπὸ†
κουραῖς ἀτίμως διατετιλμένης φόβην.
*j*φεῦ, κἂν ἀνοικτίρμων τις οἰκτίρειέ νιν
πτήσσουσαν αἰσχύνῃσιν οἷα μαίνεται
πενθοῦσα καὶ κλαίουσα τὴν πάρος χλιδήν
(dracones) προσβῆναι μέσην
τράπεζαν ἀμφὶ σῖτα καὶ καρχήσια
πόλλ’ ἐν κακοῖσι θυμὸς εὐνηθεὶς ὁρᾷ
μήπω μέγ’ εἴπῃς, πρὶν τελευτήσαντ’ ἴδῃς
τίκτουσι γάρ τοι καὶ νόσους δυσθυμίαι
γῆρας διδάσκει πάντα καὶ χρόνου τριβή
ἄκων δ’ ἁμαρτὼν οὔτις ἀνθρώπων κακός
σίτοισι παγχόρτοισιν ἐξενίζομεν

ΧΟ. πολλῶν δ’ ἐν πολυπληθίᾳ πέλεται
οὔτ’ ἀπ’ εὐγενέων ἐσθλὸς οὔτ’ ἀχρείων
τὸ λίαν†κακός· βροτῶν δὲ πιστὸν οὐδέν
Διονύσου τοῦ ταυροφάγου
ἤνεγκον
Pelias Sidero, quae in templum Iunonis profugerat, occidit
ἐπ’ αὐτῶν (τῶν) βωμῶν

ΥΒΡΙΣ ΣΑΤΥΡΙΚΗ

Λήθην τε τὴν πάντων ἀπεστερημένην,
κωφήν, ἄναυδον
ἐσθίειν ἐθέλων τὸν δέλφακα

ΥΔΡΟΦΟΡΟΙ

ὄχοις Ἀκεσταίοισιν ἐμβεβὼς πόδα
πολύκοινον Ἀμφιτρίταν
Βακχᾶς (i.e. Dionysus)

ΦΑΙΑΚΕΣ

καὶ βορᾶς ἀρτύματα
ἀποσημῆναι

ΦΑΙΔΡΑ

οὐ γὰρ δίκαιον ἄνδρα γενναῖον φρένας
τέρπειν, ὅπου γε μὴ δίκαια τέρψεται
ἀπέπτυσεν λόγους
σύγγνωτε κἀνάσχεσθε σιγῶσαι· τὸ γὰρ
γυναιξὶν αἰσχρὸν συγγυναῖκα δεῖ στέγειν
αἴσχη μέν, ὦ γυναῖκες, οὐδ’ ἂν εἷς φύγοι
βροτῶν ποθ’, ᾧ καὶ Ζεὺς ἐφορμήσῃ κακά·
νόσους δ’ ἀνάγκη τὰς θεηλάτους φέρειν
τὸν εὐτυχοῦντα πάντ’ ἀριθμήσας βροτῶν
οὐκ ἔστιν ὄντως ὄντιν’ εὑρήσεις ἕνα
οὕτω γυναικὸς οὐδὲν ἂν μεῖζον κακὸν
κακῆς ἀνὴρ κτήσαιτ’ ἂν οὐδὲ σώφρονος
κρεῖσσον· παθὼν δ’ ἕκαστος ὧν τύχῃ λέγει
οὐ γάρ ποτ’ ἂν γένοιτ’ ἂν ἀσφαλὴς πόλις
ἐν ᾗ τὰ μὲν δίκαια καὶ τὰ σώφρονα
λάγδην πατεῖται, κωτίλος δ’ ἀνὴρ λαβὼν
πανοῦργα χερσὶ κέντρα κηδεύει πόλιν
ἔρως γὰρ ἄνδρας οὐ μόνους ἐπέρχεται
οὐδ’ αὖ γυναῖκας, ἀλλὰ καὶ θεῶν ἄνω
ψυχὰς ταράσσει κἀπὶ πόντον ἔρχεται·
καὶ τόνδ’ ἀπείργειν οὐδ’ ὁ παγκρατὴς σθένει
*e*Ζεύς, ἀλλ’ ὑπείκει καὶ θέλων ἐγκλίνεται
ἀλλ’ εἰσὶ μητρὶ παῖδες ἄγκυραι βίου
Α. ἔζης ἄρ’, οὐδὲ γῆς ἔνερθ’ ᾤχου θανών;
Β. οὐ γὰρ πρὸ μοίρας ἡ τύχη βιάζεται.
ἔσαινεν οὐρᾷ μ’ ὥτα κυλλαίνων κάτω
γλώσσης ἀπαυστὶ στάζε μυξώδης ἀφρός
ἀελλάδες φωναί
ἄγος
ἄκλεπτοι
αὐτομόλως
ἀψεφές
μεμωλυσμένη

ΦΘΙΩΤΙΔΕΣ

νέος πέφυκας· πολλὰ καὶ μαθεῖν σε δεῖ
καὶ πόλλ’ ἀκοῦσαι καὶ διδάσκεσθαι μακρά
γέρων γέροντα παιδαγωγήσω σ’ ἐγώ
ἡ πατροκτόνος δίκη
κεκλῇτ’ ἂν αὐτῷ

ΦΙΛΟΚΤΗΤΗΣ Ο ΕΝ ΤΡΟΙΑΙ

‹ΦΙΛΟΚΤ.› ὀσμῆς μόνον
ὅπως ˘¯ μὴ βαρυνθήσεσθέ μου
ἀλλ’ ἔσθ’ ὁ θάνατος λοῖσθος ἰατρὸς νόσων
μέλη βοῶν ἄναυλα καὶ ῥακτήρια
δράκοντα
καὶ ῥάβδος ὡς κήρυκος Ἑρμαία διπλοῦ
δράκοντος ἀμφίκρανος
δρυοπαγῆ στόλον
ζηλῶ

ΦΙΝΕΥΣ A et B

χερσὶν ἁρπάγοις
οὐδ’ ἂν τὸ Βοσπόρειον ἐν Σκύθαις ὕδωρ
ἰδοὺ στυγητοῦ κρατὸς ἀγρία φόβη
τομαῖος
ἀχάλκευτα τρύπανα
ἀρτύμασι
(ἀντὶ γὰρ τυφλοῦ)
ἐξωμμάτωται καὶ λελάμπρυνται κόρας,
Ἀσκληπιοῦ παιῶνος εὐμενοῦς τυχών
βλέφαρα κέκλῃται δ’ ὡς καπηλείου θύρα
νεκρὸς τάριχος εἰσορᾶν Αἰγύπτιος
ἀπενώτισαν
καταρράκται (de Harpyiis dictum)
κηρίωμα
μάστακας
ὅμαυλον
Σήσαμον

ΦΟΙΝΙΞ

κύναρος ἄκανθα πάντα πληθύει γύην
ὑπόστασις (‘insidiae’)
φορβὰς γυνή

ΦΡΙΞΟΣ

ὅρια κελεύθου τῆσδε γῆς προαστίας
κυνηδὸν ἐξέπραξά νιν κνυζούμενον
ἀφελής
ἀρνεώς

ΦΡΥΓΕΣ

τοὺς εὐγενεῖς γὰρ κἀγαθούς, ὦ παῖ, φιλεῖ
Ἄρης ἐναίρειν· οἱ δὲ τῇ γλώσσῃ θρασεῖς
φεύγοντες ἄτας ἐκτός εἰσι τῶν κακῶν·
Ἄρης γὰρ οὐδὲν τῶν κακῶν λωτίζεται
οὐ λήξετ', οὐ παύσεσθε τούσδε τοὺς γάμους
ἀνυμεναιοῦντες;

ΧΡΥΣΗΣ

ὦ πρῶρα λοιβῆς Ἑστία, κλύεις τάδε;
¯ μακέλλῃ Ζηνὸς ἐξαναστραφῇ
τοιοῦτος ὢν ἄρξειε τοῦδε τοῦ κρέως
ἐγὼ μίαν μὲν ἐξιονθίζω τρίχα
ἐσχάρα (βωμόσ)

ΩΡΕΙΘΥΙΑ

ΘΗΣΕΥΣ

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[]ν·

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[].ν·

[]...[

...
ἐ]πεὶ ἄφατα κε[
ἄναυδοι δυσ.[

ΑΡΙΑΔΝΗ δ̣ύ̣σ̣τηνα τέκνα̣ [⏑̆––⏑̆–
δοκῶ πρὸς ὑμᾶς [⏑̆––⏑̆–
10 ΕΡΙΒΟΙΑ οἰκτρὰ φρο[ν
οὐ γὰρ ἀλε.[
λέγηι κνω[
[]μ.[..]. δ̣ὲ δ̣εσπότι[⏑̆––⏑̆–
[ ]το προ.[
15 [ ]τμου.[
[ ]ημακο[
[ ]α̣̣ραδη[
[ ].ωπρ[
[ ]εναι.[
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[δα]κ̣̣ρυτ̣ο̣[
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[ ]ρωπ..[
35 [ ].λιν’ αορ[
[ ].ουντά.[
⏑˘]. οἰκτίρουσα[–⏑˘–
⏑]ᾳ γὰρ τοιαῦτα [–⏑˘–
⏑˘]αι παῖ μὴ φε[–⏑˘–
40 ⏑]αρ οἱ ξένοι τι.[–⏑˘–
⏑]μ’ ἀπ’ ἀνδρῶν φιλτατ[–⏑˘–
[ ].ει βίοτον· ὁιτ’ ιᾶνδ’ ε[
[κα]κοπαθεῖ μόρωι φερομε[⏑˘–
[κα]τελεήσατε κατελεή[σατε
45 [ἄρ]ιστοι βροτῶν [
⏑(˘)]εων ἄτερθε καὶ πατρ[–˘–
⏑˘–]ἄφυκτον αἰμα[⏑˘–
[ ].ος ἐχθρότερος [
[ ]ησία πάρει

[ ]’ ἀλκά
[ ].θ’ ἥμιν ἥδε
[ ]λα
[ ]πω
[ ]έπ̣ω
...
οὔκ· ἀλλὰ [
ἄ σ’ ἐ̣ξεκ[
‹ΘΗΣΕΥΣ› ἥκιστ’· ἀ[
ἀλλ’ οὖσα[
παθων [
τίνειν ᾳ̣[
τούτων [
οὔτ’ ἔμ̣ε̣[λ]ο̣ν [ο]ὔτ’ ἤ̣σ̣κησᾳ̣ [
μή μ’ εἰκ[ὸ]ς ε̣[ἰ]πεῖν· ἀλλ’ α.[
καὶ πρόσθε δὴ ‘γὼ πολλάκ[ις
καθε̣ῖλον αὐτὸς ταῖν ἐμ[αῖν
καὶ νῦν π[έ]ποιθα τοῦτον [
ληφθ̣ήσε̣̣ται πάροιθεν [
θη.[ ].ναθ[.]..ν μήποθ[‘
δασμ̣ὸν τρ̣ίφ[υλ]ον ἠιθέων ἄξ[
ἦ [γ]άρ π̣ο̣̣τ̣[...]τρέφουσα χ̣[
χθὼν Ἰσθμίοις κρημνοῖσι φ[
χὠ ξυμπάραυλος Κρομμυὼ[ν
σῦν̣ ἐμπόρω[ν] δηλήμον’ ἦν [
ἔπαυσα δειν[ ].ς κἀνυποστάτ̣[
ἔπαυ]σα δὲ Σκ[είρ]ωνα τὸν θα[
.....]ονωῳ̣ [...]ερθ̣ε ποντ̣[
[ ]πλ̣[
...
...
].τ̣α.[
]τρὶς ἐκμ[
]λ̣’ εἰσόμεσ[θα
...
...

[ ]..[

[ ] [

⌊ ⌋....⌊

[]νδη ποδῳ[
30 []αμα παῳ̣ι.[
[]οῦδ’ ὠκρατη[
[ ].[ ]νυ̣[
...
...
[]κτε[
[]αυτη[
35 []μειστ[

[ ]̣̆.[

...
χῤή [....]λείπειν η[
απερ[.]..[ ]ς ἡμῖν τ̣εῳ̣[
δοκεῖ[ς] ἅπασιν· οὐδεγ[

ΘΗ]ΣΕΥΣ ἄπειμι τοίνυ̣ν· [ ]κλ̣υ[
40 δίκαια πρά́σσει[ν] κ̣ε.[
‹ΧΟΡΟΣ› εἴην ὅθι̣ [
καρα..[
]καιτο..[
ναιε.[
45]θ̣’ ἀπ[

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ο̣ν[
κλ.[
50 προ[

[.].[

...

ἄγ’, ἀξιο[
τοιοῦτος [
φρουρᾳ[..]..[...].[
τηρῳ[ῦντ]ες ἤδη μ[
20 κάτοισθα - πῶ[ς] δ’ οὔ; - τ.[
ἐν τῆι τεκού[ς]ηι δ’ εὐφ[ρόνηι
ᾧ μέν τις ἄστρων φ[
σκαιός τ’ ἔγωγε καὶ ο[
ὧδε ξυνίημ’ ἀστέρ[
25 τώδ’ αὐτὸς εἶδον· κ[
λευκοῖς τε γὰρ φῶς ε[
χωροῦν παλιμπ[ορ
μέσον διήιρει [
τόν τ’ ἀστραπ[
30 δύοντε κἀγὼ [
χὠ μὲν καλῶς [
νέον τι πραξ[
λευκὴν γαλή[νην
ἀεὶ δ’ α[.]ωθηλ[
35 ἥστ[ραπ]τ’ ἰ[.]..[

[ ].[

...
].[ ]. φοξὸν [
].ολλον δ[
ἐ]ξῆγε κα[
τοιάνδ’ οτ[
25 ἦν ὁ ξένο[
πρωτο[

.....[

εχ.....(.)[
θάμβους [
30 ὡς δ’ εὐτρε[π
στὰς προσμ[
καλεῖ· πόσο[
αὐτοῦ κικλ[ησκ

εὐχῶν· πα[
35 δ̣ώ̣σ̣ειν ὅτ[
ἀλλ’ η̣ὖκτ’ ὅ.[
ἔσε.[.’.]δ̣αιμ[
[ ]νος· ε̣[
...
[].ληνφ[
[]μ̣ίσθου δ[
20 [ ]τουτ[
[ ]κειπ[
[ ]. τίς [
[ ]ικεισ[
[ ]σκ[
25 [ ]νωγα[
...
[]αρτον [.]νεμοι̣...[
10 [ ]ταυ[.]̣νωστετ[
[ ].ν ἦμιν̣ [
[ ]ελκυστο[
[ ] ἐ̣μ̣φανεσ.[
[ ]...ῆ’ νΐσω̣[
15 [ ]εκνο..[
[ ]νο.[
...
[]αθανατ[
[]τηντισμ[
[ ]τιλησ[
20 [ ]....[
...
[].ξιδοῦ[
[ε]λθόντ[
[ ]κε[ ]ν..[
...
[]οναπ[
25 []ις προβ[

[ ].[

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[]λ̣ᾶισ[
[ ]ει·.[
...
[]λ̣ημεν[
30 []λειων τα[
[]ησμα..[
[ ]νδ’ ο[
...
...
[ ]ηγη[
[].τρωτο.[
35 [ ]νωτου[
[ ]’λα..ρ[
[ ]πηπ.[
...
].χη̣ι̣[
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40 [

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[.]ξ.[
μη̣ν[
45 οἴμο[ι
χρήιζε[
αὐτή σ.[
τὸ μὴ οὐ [
δεδοικ[
50 πείσωσ’ [
ὡσεὶ τόδ̣[
κτημ̣[
τῶι νυν [
π[
55 τ[

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μη[
σχι[
ηδη[
60 βου[
του[

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...
.].[...]ι χορ[
τὸ.[...]τε κα.[
65 πο[..]αι δεδ.[
θυτῆρες εἶν[αι
ἀρ̣ο̣τῳ[...(.)]γηφαγ̣ειν[
..]υρο[...]υλοῠ[...]υ[
[ ]. οὐχ ἱππ̣[
70 [ ]μη μεγα[
[ ]ῠδ’ αμαρτ[
...
...
...].γε.[
αυτη[
ἀλλ’ οῠ[
75 φρον[
.π.[
.]η̣λ̣[
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80 ο.[
χ[

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[ ]ς
[].
[]τυχεῖς
85 []
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[].ες
[]αφασ.[
[].ε̣να̣.[
...
90 ...
[ ]σ̣αγει.[
[ ]τει δικα̣[

[ ]

[‹¯¯]κύων
[‹¯˘]. ἔσχατον
95 ¯˘¯¯˘ ‹¯ ἐ]μπνεῖ κα[
[‹]α̣σ̣ ἀντιστροφ[
[‹]ληθῆναι φρε[ν
[‹ὁ]μοφρονῶ γε μή[ν
[ ]μ̣ο̣ι ξυντρ.[.].[
100 [ ]..επ[
...
...
[ ].[ς]ω̣τηρ.[
[ ].ει.ωμη[
¯˘¯]ν Κεκροπ̣ι[
[ ]α̣υδᾶται̣..(.)[
105 [ ]ν κλει̣νη[
[ ]α πρὸς τί̣ μ̣[
[ ]ṯη̣[....]η̣[
[ ]α..[

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110 ...
[ ].ον
[ ]κρατος
[ ]αᾳ
[]....ν
[ ]ν
115 [ ]..
[ ]τεκν.[
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schol.

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[] αφ[
120 []με[
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...
[ ].πᾳ.[
[]υταλ.[
[]σα νῦν [
[]α σύ τ’ ἐλ.[
125 []ν [
[]καιφ[

[ ].[

...
...
[ ]ξω πρῳ[
[]φύγαιπά[
130 []ζευγνυῃ[

[]ἔμφυλος [
[]θεμις αν[
[ ]...ντο.[
[ ]τειτ[
135 [ ].[
...
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[ ].[

[ ].ι.[
[ ]ε ὀ[
[ ]π[
140 [ ].[

[ ]..[

[ ]πορ[
[ ]αδ’ ἐσπν[
⏑˘]ηδη τῆιδε..[⏑˘–
145 [ ]μος μα[
[ ].λίας δ’ ιξ[
[ ]γειαπολλ[
[ ]....γα[
...
...

[ ].[

150 [ ]δαποτασδ[
[ ]αδε δακρυτ[
⏑˘]ς ὑμᾶς γαρτ[˘–⏑⏑˘–
[ ]γονη[

[ ] [

155 [ ]σεωγ[

[ ] [

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[ ]ṭρος [
[ ].υ· [
160 [ ] [
[].ẹυξα[
[ ]ṭακ[
...
...
[]ιλειν[
[ ]ῶνδελ̣.[
165 [] ἆς αγ[
...
...
[ ]δ̣ιτον[
[]ηρων [
[]γανιζο[
[].ατιτο[
170 []φως [
[]ντο.[
[ ]ε[
...
...

[ ]...[

[ ]λ̣ασθ[
175 [].εγεν[
...
]ṭ̣α̣ι[
]κυι.[
180]και[
]ῃιτ.[
[ ]α̣δ̣[...]ι̣γ̣[
[]σεκ[..]θεν[
[]προπεμ̣π̣[

185 []ᾠικειτ..[
[ ]ι̣σ̣αφιγμ̣[ε
[ ] παρέ̣σ̣τ̣[
[ ]γνον[
[]τ̣οχηυτο.[
190 [ ]ευ̣η[
[ ]κ̣τ.(.)[
[ ].εκ[
[ ]τ̣αρ̣υ[
[έ̣]κκαλ[
195 []λ̣κιδα[
[]ευσ̣..[

[ ].[

[ ]ατη[
[]η̣ικαθυ[
200 [ ]....κυ[
[ ]κυ̣μο[
[ ]να καὶ δ[

[ ].[

[ ]ρ[
205 [ ]ωσω[
[ ]ετ[
[ ]αυτ.[
[]π̣αλ..[
[ ]πείρ[
210 [ ]ηνο[
[ ]ία κ[
]γ’ έ̣μφα[ν
]ην εστη.[
]α̣υτονα[
215]ο̣ν.[

[ ].[.].[

[ ]βρο[

[ ]ν κλ[
[].ισιᾳ[
220 [ ]ϰα[
[].ι̣ϙ[

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[]....[

225 []τ̣ροσα[
[].ειτη[
[]ᾳ̣ι κεῖν[
[].λουσῡ̣[
[]ᾳθλι[
230 [ ]εν[
[ ]ο̣ι· δ.[

[ ].[

[ ]νο[
[]υσιμ̣[
235].στο[
]ρ̣[
]μαι[
]χυν[
]συν[
240]’[
]ϙεν[
].ι̣γ[
].ι̣λ̣[
[]λ̣.[
245 []ηδά[
[ ]χρ̣[
[]δα.[
[]ροσ.[

[] [

250 [ ]..[

[ ].[

[].υκαν[
[]υν μολ[
[]ανοις κτ[
255 []ουδαν[
[]άσηισιγ[

[ ].[

[]γαϙ φορ[
[ ]ως φρασ.[
260 []ατον τοδ[
[ ].αϙησο[

[ ].[

[ ]σμεν[
[ ]ς δολε[
265 [].τριδ’ α[
[].ιτω[

[ ].[

[ ]..[

[]λεια[
270 []αυτ[
[]ανο[
[]πνε[
].δ’ α[
]π.ο.[
275]ανε.[
[ ]θαι.[
[ν]αμερτ[
[ ].τ.[
[]γον[
280 [ ]ν[

[]..[

[]λ̣λ̣ᾳ̣[
[ ]να[
[ ]νη[
285 [ ].ρ.[

[ ].[

[ ].ο.[
[]ντερα[
[]...ϙ̣[
290 [ ].[
].α[
]δια[
]ουῤ[

]..[

295 [ ]φι̣[
[]άρα[
[].ομ[

[ ][

]ǫ̣[.].[
300]ϙ̣ηδ.[
]..υ[

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[ ]αλλ[

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305 [ ]φνῃ[
[ ]ησει[
[]νιαν[
[ ]π̣[ ]ε̣[

[ ].[

310 [].ημ[
[]ραω.[
[ ]νθ̣ε[
[].οκ..[
[ ].γενᾳ̣[
315 [ ]ηνπ[
[ ]τι δρω[
[ ]ṭᾳ̣ι.[
]ελπιδες δ’ .[
]ε̣σ̣χον....[
320 []υντ[
[]τε καὶ τ[
[]υ̣α κᾳ̣[
[].το[

[ ].[

325 []..μ[
[]σ̣αυ.[
[ ]αρτο[
[]χαλιγ̣[
[ ]ο̣β.[
330 [ ]ω̣ιμ[
[ ]κ̣[
[]ροσωμέ.[ ]...[
[]ρωσαν· ὡς οὐδ̣[
[ ]μα.....[
335 [ ]θαο̣υ[
[ ]χ̣ουμ̣[
Ἀν]δ̣ρόγε[ω
[ ]κιγχαγ̣[
[ ]υκε̣[
340 [ ]ω[.]...[
[ ].ται κο̣[
[].ιεπρα[
[ ]νοσον[
[ ]υ̣γα[

345 [].ονδ̣[
[]τ̣ος ἐξ̣[
[ ]ο[
]βω̣[
]ω[
350 [ ]ζομ̣[
[] γίγαϙ̣ [
]τ̣οδ̣ε[
]α̣λ̣ιε[
]α̣·φμ[
355]λ̣ο̣[
]ο̣στ̣[
]πο[
]εχ[
].α[
360]τ̣ε̣[

[ ]...[

[ ]α.[ ]ν̣θ̣η̣π̣[
[ ]....να̣ε̣ῖχ[
[ ].[ ]...ανε.[
365 []..[ ]....εχο.[
[].[ ]..[.].ε̣μ̣[
[ ].οιτε̣[

[ ].[

...
[] πῶϛ ἄρα [
370 [ ]εν.[

[ ] [

[ ]ν̣ κατε̣[
[ ]ουϙ̣.[
...
...
]σιω[

375]παιδ.[

] [

]...[

...
ἄλυτον
τὰς Ἑκαταίας μαγίδας δόρπων
τὸ πρὸς βίαν
πίνειν ἴσον πέφυκε τῷ διψῆν κακόν
ἀρραγὲς ὄμμα
μισῶ μὲν ὅστις τἀφανῆ περισκοπῶν
κἀνταῦθα ⏑ – ⏑ – – ⏑ – – ⏑ –
πᾶς προσκυνεῖ δὲ τὸν στρέφοντα κύκλον ἡλίου ⏑ –()
πῶς ἂν οὐκ ἂν ἐν δίκῃ
θάνοιμ’ ἄν;
ἀείζως γενεά
ἀείζων πένθος
Τεισὼ δ’ ἄνωθεν εστινη†αἱματορρόφος
ἀκόλαστον σῶμα
σπουδὴ γὰρ ἡ κατ’ οἶκον ἐγκεκρυμμένη
οὐ πρὸς θυραίων οὐδαμῶς ἀκουσίμη.
ἐξαίρετον τίθημι τὴν ἀκουσίαν
ἀντάρης νυκτερὶς ὄψεσιν
ῥήξασα κίρκους
οἴμοι, λέλημμαι
ἐτῆρας ἀμνοὺς θεοῖς ἔρεξ’ ἐπακτίοις
Ἥλι’, οἰκτίροις ἐμέ,
‹ὃν› οἱ σοφοὶ λέγουσι γεννητὴν θεῶν
πατέρα ‹τε› πάντων
βαρὺς βαρὺς ξύνοικος, ὦ ξένοι, βαρύς
Α. καὶ πρῶτα μὲν
αἴρω ποθεινὴν μᾶζαν, ἣν φερέσβιος
Δηὼ βροτοῖσι χάρμα δωρεῖται φίλον·
ἔπειτα πνικτὰ τακερὰ μηκάδων μέλη
5 χλόην καταμπέχοντα σάρκα νεογενῆ.
Β. τί λέγεις;
Α. τραγῳδίαν περαίνω Σοφοκλέους.

οὐ γάρ τι νόθος τῷδ’ ἀπεδείχθην,
ἀμφοῖν δὲ πατὴρ αὐτὸς ἐκλήθη·
Ζεὺς ἐμὸς ἄρχων, θνητῶν δ’ οὐδείς.

ΣΑΤΥΡΟΣ· ἀνακειμένῳ
μέσον εἰς τὸν αὐχέν’ εἰσαλοίμην
ὦ γλῶσσα, σιγήσασα τὸν πολὺν χρόνον,
πῶς δῆτα τλήσῃ πρᾶγμ’ ὑπεξελεῖν τόδε;
ἦ τῆς ἀνάγκης οὐδὲν ἐμβριθέστερον,
ὑφ’ ἧς τὸ κρυφθὲν ἐκφανεῖς ἀνακτόρων.
¯ τὸ μεθύειν πημονῆς λυτήριον
καρύαι μελίαι τε
θάρσει· μέγας σοι τοῦδ’ ἐγὼ φόβου μοχλός
ναῦται δ’ ἐμηρύσαντο ναὸς ἰσχάδα
χορὸς δ’ ἀναύδων ἰχθύων ἐπερρόθει,
σαίνοντες οὐραίοισι dominam
διψῶντι γάρ τοι πάντα προσφέρων σοφὰ
οὐκ ἂν πλέον τέρψειας ἢ πιεῖν διδούς
¯ κακῶς σὺ πρὸς θεῶν ὀλουμένη,
ἢ τὰς ἀρύστεις ὧδ’ ἔχουσ’ ἐκώμασας
φίλη γὰρ ἡ θεωρίς

ΧΟ. (mulierum, metu levatus)
θυμῷ δ’ οὔτις φαιδρὰ χορεύει
τάρβους θυγάτηρ
ἵκτινος ὡς ἔκλαγξε παρασύρας κρέας
φυσᾷ γὰρ οὐ σμικροῖσιν αὐλίσκοις ἔτι,
ἀλλ’ ἀγρίαις φύσαισι φορβειᾶς ἄτερ
γυναικομίμοις ἐμπρέπεις ἐσθήμασιν
πρὸς δ’ οἷον ἦξεις δαίμον’ ὡς ἔρωτα†
ὃς οὔτε τοὐπιεικὲς οὔτε τὴν χάριν
οἶδεν, μόνην δ’ ἔστερξε τὴν ἁπλῶς δίκην
καὶ τὸν θεὸν τοιοῦτον ἐξεπίσταμαι,
σοφοῖς μὲν αἰνικτῆρα θεσφάτων ἀεί,

σκαιοῖς δὲ φαῦλον κἀν βραχεῖ διδάσκαλον
τόθ’ ηὗ]ρον ἐς πόσι[ν] ῥυτόν,
σίκιννι]ν
Θήβας λέγεις μοι καὶ πύλας ἑπταστόμους,
οὗ δὴ μόνον τίκτουσιν αἱ θνηταὶ θεούς
μύω τε καὶ δέδορκα κἀξανίσταμαι,
πλέον φυλάσσων αὐτὸς ἢ φυλάσσομαι
πύλης ἄναξ θυρωρέ
Ἄθως σκιάζει νῶτα Λημνίας βοός
τρύχει καλυφθεὶς Θεσσαλῆς ἀπληγίδος
ἢ σφηκιὰν βλίττουσιν εὑρόντες τινά
ἐγὼ δὲ χερσὶν ἄγραν βρίακχον
οἷος γὰρ ἡμῶν δημόκοινος οἴχεται
¯ τὸ δ’ ἔγχος ἐν ποσὶν κυλίνδεται
ἔγχος ἱέμενον
πολὺς δὲ πηλὸς ἐκ πίθων τυρβάζεται
γράμμα κηρύκειον
μύρῳ λευγαλέῳ
ὕβρις δέ τοι
οὐπώποθ’ ἥβης εἰς τὸ σῶφρον ἵκετο,
ἀλλ’ ἐν νέοις ἀνθεῖ τε καὶ πάλιν φθίνει
θέλοιμι πηλὸν ὀργάσαι
προσῆλθε μητρὶ καὶ φυταλμίῳ πατρί
οὐχ ὅπου λαμπάδες εὐνούχοισιν ὄμμασιν
ζῶντι ποδὶ χρώμενος
κοκκυβόας ὄρνις
γηγενῆ βούβαλιν
ψακαλοῦχοι
μητέρες αἶγές τ’ ἐπιμαστίδιον
γόνον ὀρταλίχων ἀναφαίνοιεν
¯ σὺ γὰρ γέροντα βουλεύεις ˘¯
Μολοσσικαῖσι χερσὶν ἐντείνων πέδας
ὡς μήτε κρούσῃς μήθ’ ὑπὲρ χεῖλος βάλῃς
οὐ σκέπαρνος οὐδὲ πρίονος
πληγαί
οὔτι τοι μέτρον μάτας

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ (τῷ Διομήδει)·
ἐγὼ δ’ ἐρῶ σοι δεινὸν οὐδέν, οὔθ’ ὅπως
φυγὰς πατρῴας ἐξελήλασαι χθονός,
οὔθ’ ὡς ὁ Τυδεὺς ἀνδρὸς αἷμα συγγενὲς
κτείνας ἐν Ἄργει ξεῖνος ὢν οἰκίζεται,
οὔθ’ ὡς πρὸ Θηβῶν ὠμοβρὼς ἐδαίσατο
τὸν Ἀστάκειον παῖδα διὰ κάρα τεμών
γάρον τὸν ἰχθύειον
Λυδία λίθος σίδηρον τηλόθεν προσηγάγου
σειρίου κυνὸς δίκην
σεμνὰ τῆς σῆς παρθένου μυστήρια
    λαβόντες ἄφθονον
ἄγραν πρὸς οἴκους εὐτυχοῦντες ἄξομεν
ζημίαν λαβεῖν ἄμεινόν ἐστιν ἢ κέρδος κακόν
ὅ τι γὰρ φύσις ἀνέρι δῷ,
τόδ’ οὔποτ’ ἂν ἐξέλοις
ὅρκους ἐγὼ γυναικὸς εἰς ὕδωρ γράφω
ῥάχοισιν ὀρχάδος στέγης
ἀμάχετοι λοχαγοί
τὸ θερμὸν τοῦ ὀβελοῦ
ἄκουε, σίγα· τίς ποτ’ ἐν δόμοις βοή;
αἰμύλος ἔρως
    τὸν προβώμιον κλύω
δαίμον’ αἱματοσπόδητον
ἄκρον φρονεῖν, ἄκρον δρᾶν
ἀμούσωτος γὰρ οὐδαμῶς ἄπει
    ὥσπερ ἀμπρευτὴς ὄνος
ἀεὶ ˘––˘ μαστιγούμενος
ἀμφίκουρον (κορμόν)
ἀναθερμαίνειν (φρένας)
χλωροῖσι κορμοῖς ἀνδράχλης ἀναίθεται
ἀνήγρετο (ἐξ ὕπνου)
ἀνημέρωτος (γῆ)
σὺ δέδωκας ταῦτ’, Ἀνησιδώρα
‹οὐ› μηκέτ’ ἀνθρωπιστὶ διαλέξῃ τάδε;
ἐγὼ δ’ εἰς ἀπάντησιν {τινὸς} σπεύδων
ἀπανταχῇ τὸ φῶς καλόν
ἄπηλα πεδία, ἄπηλος ὁδός

ἀπ᾽ ὀφθαλμῶν ἀπορρῖψαι
ἁρμαλιᾶς ὄχλος
ἀρότρῳ ἀκοντίζειν
παπαῖ, χορευτὴς αὐλὸς οὐκέτι ψοφεῖ
¯ ἄμισθος ὁ ξένος πορεύεται
ἔργου δὲ παντὸς ἤν τις ἄρχηται καλῶς,
καὶ τὰς τελευτὰς εἰκός ἐσθ᾽ οὕτως ἔχειν
στενωπὸς Ἅιδου καὶ παλιρροία βυθοῦ
τὸ κέρδος ἡδύ, κἂν ἀπὸ ψευδῶν ἴῃ
οὐκ ἐξάγουσι καρπὸν οἱ ψευδεῖς λόγοι
γένοιτο κἂν ἄπλουτος ἐν τιμαῖς ἀνήρ
οὐδὲν κακίων πτωχός, εἰ καλῶς φρονεῖ
ὡς τρισόλβιοι
κεῖνοι βροτῶν, οἳ ταῦτα δερχθέντες τέλη
μόλωσ᾽ ἐς Ἅιδου· τοῖσδε γὰρ μόνοις ἐκεῖ
ζῆν ἔστι, τοῖς δ᾽ ἄλλοισι πάντ᾽ ἔχειν κακά
τυφλὸς γάρ, ὦ γυναῖκες, οὐδ᾽ ὁρῶν Ἄρης
συὸς προσώπῳ πάντα τυρβάζει κακά
οὐκ ἔστ᾽ ἀπ᾽ ἔργων μὴ καλῶν ἔπη καλά
μολυβδὶς ὥστε δίκτυον κατέσπασεν
ὅτῳ δ᾽ ἔρωτος δῆγμα παιδικὸν προσῇ
πρὸς ἄσπερ οἱ μαργῶντες ἐντονώτατοι
τὰ μὲν διδακτὰ μανθάνω, τὰ δ᾽ εὑρετὰ
ζητῶ, τὰ δ᾽ εὐκτὰ παρὰ θεῶν ᾐτησάμην
βᾶτ᾽ εἰς ὁδὸν δὴ πᾶς ὁ χειρῶναξ λεώς,
οἳ τὴν Διὸς γοργῶπιν Ἐργάνην στατοῖς
λίκνοισι προστρέπεσθε ‹καὶ› παρ᾽ ἄκμονι
τυπάδι βαρείᾳ
σὺ δ᾽ ἄνδρα θνητὸν εἰ κατέφθιτο στένεις,
εἰδὼς τὸ μέλλον οὐδὲν εἰ κέρδος φέρει;
οὐ κόσμος, οὔκ, ὦ τλῆμον, ἀλλ᾽ ἀκοσμία
φαίνοιτ᾽ ἂν εἶναι σῶν τε μαργότης φρενῶν
εὔκαρπον Κυθέρειαν
σὺ δὲ σφαδάζεις πῶλος ὡς εὐφορβίᾳ·
γαστήρ τε γάρ σου καὶ γνάθος πλήρης ˘–
ἔναυλα κωκυτοῖσιν, οὐ λύρα, φίλα

ΑΔΜΗΤΟΣ· οὐμὸς δ’ ἀλέκτωρ αὐτὸν (sc. Apollinem) ἦγε πρὸς μύλην
ἀεὶ δ’ ἀοιδῶν μοῦνος ἐν στέγαις ἐμαῖς
κωκυτὸς ἐμπέπτωκεν
⏑˘¯ μοῦσα καὶ σειρὴν μία
τὰ πλεῖστα φωρῶν αἴσχρ’ ἐφευρήσεις βροτῶν
πικρὰν πικρῷ κλύζουσι (sc. ἰατροί) φαρμάκῳ χολήν

ΝΕΣΤΩΡ (Aiaci)·
οὐ μέμφομαί σε· δρῶν γὰρ εὖ κακῶς λέγεις
οὐ γάρ τι βουλῆς ταὐτὸ καὶ δρόμου τέλος
ἡ μετανοοῦσα πρὸς τὸν μοιχόν·
ἔπεισας, ἐξέθωψας
(de senibus) βραδεῖα μὲν γὰρ ἐν λόγοισι προσβολὴ
μόλις δι’ ὠτὸς ἔρχεται ῥυπωμένου·
πρόσω δὲ λεύσσων, ἐγγύθεν δὲ πᾶς τυφλός
(Troiani) φίλιπποι καὶ κερουλκοί,
σὺν σάκει δὲ κωδωνοκρότῳ παλαισταί
ἅπαντα τἀγένητα πρῶτον ἦλθ’ ἄπαξ

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ·
Σειρῆνας εἰσαφικόμην,
Φόρκου κόρας, θροοῦντε τοὺς Ἅιδου νόμους
κἀπὶ Κυρβάντεσι χορεύσατε
φίλων τοιούτων οἱ μὲν ἑστερημένοι
χαίρουσιν, οἱ δ’ ἔχοντες εὔχονται φυγεῖν
λάμπει γὰρ ἐν χρείαισιν ὥσπερ εὐγενὴς
χαλκός· χρόνῳ δ’ ἀργῆσαν ἤμυσε στέγος
δεινὸν τὸ τᾶς Πειθοῦς πρόσωπον
ἐφέστιον οἰκέτιν (sc. περιστεράν)
⏑˘ εὖ γὰρ καὶ διχοστατῶν λόγος
σύγκολλα τἀμφοῖν ἐς μέσον τεκταίνεται
γραίας ἀκάνθης πάππος ὡς φυσώμενος
πολλῶν χαλινῶν ἔργον οἰάκων θ’ ἅμα

ταχεῖα πειθὼ τῶν κακῶν ὁδοιπορεῖ

ΜΕΝΕΛΑΟΣ· ἀλλ’ οὐμὸς ἀεὶ πότμος ἐν πυκνῷ θεοῦ
τρόχῳ κυκλεῖται καὶ μεταλλάσσει φύσιν,
ὥσπερ σελήνης ὄψις εὐφρόνας δύο
στῆναι δύναιτ’ ἂν οὔποτ’ ἐν μορφῇ μιᾷ,
ἀλλ’ ἐξ ἀδήλου πρῶτον ἔρχεται νέα,
πρόσωπα καλλύνουσα καὶ πληρουμένη,
χὥτανπερ αὐτῆς εὐπρεπεστάτη φανῇ,
πάλιν διαρρεῖ κἀπὶ μηδὲν ἔρχεται.
καὶ τὰν νέορτον, ἅς ἔτ’ ἄστολος χιτὼν
θυραῖον ἀμφὶ μηρὸν
10 πτύσσεται, Ἑρμιόναν
ὅστις γὰρ ὡς τύραννον ἐμπορεύεται
κείνου ‘στι δοῦλος, κἂν ἐλεύθερος μόλῃ.
ὦ θεοί, τίς ἆρα Κύπρις ἢ τίς Ἵμερος
τοῦδε ξυνήψατο;
ὀρθόκερως φρίκη
ἕως ὅτε†κριθώσης ὄνου
ἀσπάθητον χλαῖναν (i. e. δοράν)
ποππύζεται ζευγηλατρίς
βομβεῖ δὲ νεκρῶν σμῆνος ἔρχεταί τ’ ἄνω
οὐ χρή ποτ’ ἀνθρώπων μέγαν ὄλβον ἀπο-
βλέψαι· τανυφλοίου γὰρ ἰσαμέριος
ὅστις αἰγείρου βιοτὰν ἀποβάλλει ...
Ἀλφεσίβοιαν, ἣν ὁ γεννήσας πατήρ
ἐδοξάτην μοι τὼ δύ’ ἠπείρω μολεῖν
Κραναά
ὁ σκηπτροβάμων αἰετός, κύων Διός
σαίνεις δάκνουσα καὶ κύων λαίθαργος εἶ
οἴμοι, πέπρακται τοῦ θεοῦ τὸ θέσφατον
Ζεὺς νόστον ἄγοι τὸν νικόμαχον
καὶ παυσανίαν καὶ ἀτρείδαν
πρὸς πέτραις Ἐλυμνίαις
οὔτ’ ἄλλο φῖτυ πρῷον
ἐπειγομένων οὐ†κερκίδος ὕμνους,

ἢ τοὺς εὕδοντας ἐγείρει
παῖδας γάρ, οὓς ἔφυσ’, ἀναλώσας ἔχει
εὐφημίαν μὲν πρῶτα κηρύξας ἔχω
ὀργὴ γέροντος ὥστε μαλθακὴ κοπὶς
ἐν χειρὶ θήγει, ἐν τάχει δ’ ἀμβλύνεται
ἀεὶ γὰρ εὖ πίπτουσιν οἱ Διὸς κύβοι
εἴθ’ ἦσθα σώφρων ἔργα τοῖς λόγοις ἴσα
δάφνην φαγὼν ὀδόντι πρῖε τὸ στόμα
ἐγὼ κατ’ αὐτόν, ὡς ὁρᾷς, ἐξέρχομαι
ὃς μὴ πέπονθε τἀμά, μὴ βουλευέτω
Ἑρμαῖον κάρα
ὡς ἂν Διὸς μέτωπον ἐκταθῇ χαρᾷ
οὐ πώποθ’ ὑμᾶς συμβαλεῖν ἐπίσταμαι
ἐν τοῖσιν ἵπποις τοῖσιν ἐκλελεγμένοις
ἥδιον ἂν χωροῖμεν ἢ παντὶ σθένει
ὃς παρακτίαν
στείχων ἀνημέρωσα κνωδάλων ὁδόν
μέν’ εἰς†σοφιστὴν ἐμόν (sc. citharoedum)
ἤδη γὰρ ἕδρᾳ Ζεὺς ἐν ἐσχάτῃ θεῶν
λύσω γάρ, εἰ καὶ τῶν τριῶν ἓν οἴσομαι
ὠνὴν ἔθου καὶ πρᾶσιν, ὡς Φοῖνιξ ἀνήρ,
Σιδώνιος κάπηλος
χῶρος γὰρ αὐτός ἐστιν ἀνθρώπου φρενῶν
ὅπου τὸ τέρπον καὶ τὸ πημαῖνον φύει·
δακρυρροεῖ γοῦν καὶ τὰ καὶ τὰ τυγχάνων
ὦ γῆ Φεραία, χαῖρε, σύγγονόν θ’ ὕδωρ
Ὑπέρεια κρήνη, νᾶμα θεοφιλέστατον
μηδ’ αἰόλιζε ταῦτα
πάνσοφον κρότημα, Λαέρτου γόνος
εἰς Αἶαν πλέων
ἔστιν τις αἶα Θεσσαλῶν παγκληρία
Ἀνακτόρειον τῆσδ’ ἐπώνυμον χθονός
τί μέλλετ’, Ἀρτακῆς τε καὶ Περκώσιοι;
πάντ’ ἐκκαλύπτων ὁ χρόνος εἰς ‹τὸ› φῶς ἄγει
ἀλλ’ οὐ γὰρ ἂν τὰ θεῖα κρυπτόντων θεῶν
μάθοις ἄν, οὐδ’ εἰ πάντ’ ἐπεξέλθοις σκοπῶν
ἀμνήμονος γὰρ ἀνδρὸς ὄλλυται χάρις
σκαιοῖσι πολλοῖς εἷς σοφὸς διόλλυται
Α. ἐσθλοῦ γὰρ ἀνδρὸς τοὺς πονοῦντας ὠφελεῖν.

Β. ἀλλ’ ἡ φρόνησις ἀγαθὴ θεὸς μέγας.
ἀλλ’ οἱ κακῶς πράσσοντες οὐ κωφοὶ μόνον,
ἀλλ’ οὐδ’ ὁρῶντες εἰσορῶσι τἀμφανῆ
ὡς δυσπάλαιστόν ἐστιν ἀμαθία κακόν
ἡ δὲ μωρία
μάλιστ’ ἀδελφὴ τῆς πονηρίας ἔφυ
χαίρειν ἐπ’ αἰσχραῖς ἡδοναῖς οὐ χρή ποτε
οὐ τοῖς ἀθύμοις ἡ τύχη ξυλλαμβάνει
ἐλευθέρα γὰρ γλῶσσα τῶν ἐλευθέρων
Ἐλευθερία Διὸς ὄλβιον τέκος
αἰδὼς γὰρ ἐν κακοῖσιν οὐδὲν ὠφελεῖ·
ἡ γὰρ σιωπὴ τὠγκαλοῦντι σύμμαχος
τί ταῦτ’ ἐπαινεῖς; πᾶς γὰρ οἰνωθεὶς ἀνὴρ
ἥσσων μὲν ὀργῆς ἐστι, τοῦ δὲ νοῦ κενός·
φιλεῖ δὲ πολλὴν γλῶσσαν ἐκχέας μάτην
ἄκων ἀκούειν οὓς ἑκὼν εἶπεν λόγους.
κλέπτων δ’ ὅταν τις ἐμφανῶς ἐφευρεθῇ,
σιγᾶν ἀνάγκη, κἂν καλὸν φορῇ στόμα
ἢ δεινὸν ἆρ’ ἦν, ἡνίκ’ ἄν τις ἐσθλὸς ὢν
αὐτῷ συνειδῇ
ὅρκοισι γάρ τοι καὶ γυνὴ φεύγει πικρὰν
ὠδῖνα παίδων· ἀλλ’ ἐπεὶ λήξῃ κακοῦ,
ἐν τοῖσιν αὐτοῖς δικτύοις ἁλίσκεται
πρὸς τοῦ παρόντος ἱμέρου νικωμένη
ὅρκος γὰρ οὐδεὶς ἀνδρὶ φιλήτῃ βαρύς
οἴκοι μένειν δεῖ τὸν καλῶς εὐδαίμονα
μή μοι κρυφαῖον μηδὲν ἐξείπῃς ἔπος·
κλῇθρον γὰρ οὐδὲν ὧδ’ ἂν εὐπαγὲς λάβοις
γλώσσης, κρυφαῖον οὐδὲν οὗ διέρχεται
ὅπου γὰρ οἱ φύσαντες ἡσσῶνται τέκνων,
οὐκ ἔστιν αὕτη σωφρόνων ἀνδρῶν πόλις
νόμοις ἕπεσθαι τοῖσιν ἐγχώροις καλόν
πολλῶν πόνων δεῖ τῷ καλῶς τιμωμένῳ·
μικροῦ δ’ ἀγῶνος οὐ μέγ’ ἔρχεται κλέος
γνῶμαι πλέον κρατοῦσιν ἢ σθένος χερῶν
εἰ σῶμα δοῦλον, ἀλλ’ ὁ νοῦς ἐλεύθερος
ὦ παῖδες, ἥ τοι Κύπρις οὐ Κύπρις μόνον,
ἀλλ’ ἐστὶ πολλῶν ὀνομάτων ἐπώνυμος.
ἔστιν μὲν Ἅιδης, ἔστι δ’ ἄφθιτος βίος,

ἔστιν δὲ λύσσα μανιάς, ἔστι δ’ ἵμερος
ἄκρατος, ἔστ’ οἰμωγμός. ἐν κείνῃ τὸ πᾶν
σπουδαῖον, ἡσυχαῖον, ἐς βίαν ἄγον.
ἐντήκεται γὰρ πλευμόνων ὅσοις ἔνι
ψυχή· τίς οὐχὶ τῆσδε τῆς θεοῦ πόρος;
εἰσέρχεται μὲν ἰχθύων πλωτῷ γένει,
ἔνεστι δ’ ἐν χέρσου τετρασκελεῖ γονῇ,
νωμᾷ δ’ ἐν οἰωνοῖσι τοὐκείνης πτερόν.
ἐν θηρσίν, ἐν βροτοῖσιν, ἐν θεοῖς ἄνω.
τίν’ οὐ παλαίουσ’ ἐς τρὶς ἐκβάλλει θεῶν;
εἴ μοι θέμις - θέμις δὲ τἀληθῆ λέγειν - ,
Διὸς τυραννεῖ πλευμόνων, ἄνευ δορός,
ἄνευ σιδήρου· πάντα τοι συντέμνεται
Κύπρις τὰ θνητῶν καὶ θεῶν βουλεύματα
τίς δ’ οἶκος ἐν βροτοῖσιν ὠλβίσθη ποτὲ
γυναικὸς ἐσθλῆς χωρὶς ὀγκωθεὶς χλιδῇ;
κατ’ ὀρφανὸν γὰρ οἶκον ἀνδρόφρων γυνή
πενία δὲ συγκραθεῖσα δυσσεβεῖ τρόπῳ
ἄρδην ἀνεῖλε καὶ κατέστρεψεν βίον
ὦ θνητὸν ἀνδρῶν καὶ ταλαίπωρον γένος,
ὡς οὐδέν ἐσμεν πλὴν σκιαῖς ἐοικότες,
βάρος περισσὸν γῆς ἀναστρωφώμενοι
οὐ γὰρ θέμις ζῆν πλὴν θεοῖς ἄνευ κακῶν
στέργειν δὲ τἀκπεσόντα καὶ θέσθαι πρέπει
σοφὸν κυβευτήν, ἀλλὰ μὴ στένειν τύχην
ἐλπὶς γὰρ ἡ βόσκουσα τοὺς πολλοὺς βροτῶν
πάντ’ ἐμπέφυκε τῷ μακρῷ γήρᾳ κακά,
νοῦς φροῦδος, ἔργ’ ἀχρεῖα, φροντίδες κεναί
οὐκ ἔστι γῆρας τῶν σοφῶν, ἐν οἷς ὁ νοῦς
θείᾳ ξύνεστιν ἡμέρᾳ τεθραμμένος.
προμηθία γὰρ κέρδος ἀνθρώποις μέγα
ὅστις δὲ θνητῶν θάνατον ὀρρωδεῖ λίαν,
μῶρος πέφυκε· τῇ τύχῃ μέλει τάδε.
ὅταν δ’ ὁ καιρὸς τοῦ θανεῖν ἐλθὼν τύχῃ,
οὐδ’ ἂν πρὸς αὐλὰς Ζηνὸς ἐκφύγοι μολών.
ὅστις γὰρ ἐν κακοῖσιν ἰμείρει βίου,
ἢ δειλός ἐστιν ἢ δυσάλγητος φρένας
Α. θανόντι κείνῳ συνθανεῖν ἔρως μ’ ἔχει.
Β. ἥξεις - ἐπείγου μηδέν - εἰς τὸ μόρσιμον.

χρόνος δ’ ἀμαυροῖ πάντα κεἰς λήθην ἄγει
τἀληθὲς ἀεὶ πλεῖστον ἰσχύει λόγου
ἡ Ὠρείθυια ἀναρπαγεῖσα ὑπὸ Βορέου ἐκομίσθη
ὑπέρ τε πόντον πάντ’ ἐπ’ ἔσχατα χθονὸς
νυκτός τε πηγὰς οὐρανοῦ τ’ ἀναπτυχάς,
Φοίβου παλαιὸν κῆπον
νὴ τὼ Λαπέρσα, νὴ τὸν Εὐρώταν τρίτον,
νὴ τοὺς ἐν Ἄργει καὶ κατὰ Σπάρτην θεούς
τὸν Ἀμφιάρεων ἐδέξατο ῥαγεῖσα Θηβαία κόνις
αὐτοῖσιν ὅπλοις καὶ τετρωρίστῳ δίφρῳ
ὅθεν κατεῖδον τὴν βεβακχιωμένην
βροτοῖσι κλεινὴν Νῦσαν, ἣν ὁ βούκερως
Ἴακχος αὐτῷ μαῖαν ἡδίστην νέμει,
ὅπου τίς ὄρνις οὐχὶ κλαγγάνει;
θαυμαστὰ γὰρ τὸ τόξον ὡς ὀλισθάνει
θεοῦ δὲ πληγὴν οὐχ ὑπερπηδᾷ βροτός
εἰ δείν’ ἔδρασας, δεινὰ καὶ παθεῖν σε δεῖ
οἱ γὰρ γύνανδροι καὶ λέγειν ἠσκηκότες
θεοῦ τὸ δῶρον τοῦτο· χρὴ δ’ ὅσ’ ἂν θεοὶ
διδῶσι, φεύγειν μηδέν, ὦ τέκνον, ποτέ

ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ·
ὀρθῶς δ’ Ὀδυσσεύς εἰμ’ ἐπώνυμος κακῶν·
πολλοὶ γὰρ ὠδύσαντο δυσμενεῖς ἐμοί
ὅταν τις ᾄδῃ τὸν Βοιώτιον νόμον,
τὰ πρῶτα μὲν σχολαῖον, ἐντείνων δ’ ἀεί
βατ...[.....]ϙσϙ[....]ῳ καπνῷ[ι
(φέψαλος)
θερ...ετ..[.....].ϱυ..[
ἄβρωτος
ἀγάζεις
ἀγαί
ἀγάμετος
ἀγάσματα
ἀγήρατον (masc.)
ἄγχαζε

ἀγωγεύς
ἀγωνοθήκη
ἀδηφαγοῦσα
ἀδικόχειρας
ἀδρέπανον
ἀδρῦναι
ἄζειν
Ἀζησία
ἀθαυμάστως
αἰγίζει
ἀϊδροδίκης
αἱματῶσαι
ἀκάμπιον
ἀκληρία
ἀκολουθία
ἀκουσείων
ἀκουσέτην
ἀκούσιμα
ἀκρόνυξ
ἀκροφύσιον
ἀλεύσω
Ἀλύβας
ἀλινοῦσιν
ἀλκάθω
ἀλλάχθητε
Ἀλούσιος
ἀλώπηξ ()
ἁμαρτωλή
ἀμβλουχία
ἀμβλώψ vel ἀμβλωπός
ἀμπυκώμασιν
ἀμύνανδρον
ἀμύνασθαι
ἀμυχρόν vel ἀμυχνόν vel ἀμυγνόν
ἀμφώβολα
ἀνακαλπάζει vel καλπάζει
ἀνάκλητος
Ἀνακτόριος
Ἀναξιδώρα (ἀνάγουσα ἀμπελῶνασ)

ἀνδραποδοκλόπος
ἀναστρέφων
ἀναψύχουσα
ἀνόσητος
ἀνούστερος, ἀνουστέρα
ἄνυμφον
ἀολλεῖς
ἀπαιόλημα
ἀπαλά
ἀπάνθρωπος
ἀπολωπίσαι
ἀπόμορφα
ἀποφανῶσαι
Ἀργειφόντης (de Apolline)
ἀρραγῶς
ἄρταμος (de homicida)
ἀτιμαγέλης
ἀτιμοσύνη
αὐλῶπιν (de hasta longa)
ἀυπνίαν
αὐτάγγελτος
αὐτόπαιδα
ἀφαιᾶσαι
ἀχανές (de Labyrintho)
βαῖται (de tentoriis barbaricis)
βάκκαρις
βάσκανος (ἀχάριστοσ)
βρωταῖς
βυδοί
βωλόναι
Γένης
ἡ γεννήσασα vel ἡ μαστὸν ἐπισχοῦσα
γεροιδὰν ἢ γεροῦντας†
γλοιάς
γνώμων
δενδίλλειν (περιβλέπειν)
δεσπότειρα
διωκτός (de exsule)
ἐκτάσσειν

ἐνδαές
ἐνεκότουν
ἔλυτρα
Apollo ἐνόλμιος
ἔξπηχυς
ἔπηλις
ἐπιστατεῖν (βραβεύειν)
ἐπίφατος (ἐπιβόητοσ)
εὐορνιθίαν (ἀγαθὸν οἰώνισμα)
εὐτύχεια
ἡμίκακον
θαλαμιός
nox θήλεια
θήλυδος
ἐθράχθη
ἵδριδα
κέκονα
καῦρος
Κερβέριοι
κινάκης
λαπίζειν
λευγαλέα
ληκυθιστής
λιτροσκόπους (ἀργυραμοίβουσ)
Μαγνῆτις
μελλόποσις
μιαίνεσθαι
μυνδὸς ἰχθῦς
μώμεναι
νοσηλός
ξάσμα
ξυνῶνα
ὀκριάζων
ὁλοσπάδες (vel σπαδεῖς)
ὀρθόφρων
οὐράν (αἰδοῖον)
ὄφελμα
πεσσεία
προσσαίνειν

πτέρυγας (πηδάλια)
πτύον
πύγαργος (ἐπὶ τοῦ δειλοῦ)
ῥᾶ
Ἠραικοί vel Γραικοί
ῥαχία montis
Ἠρειτά
ῥήτωρ
ῥικνός
σάγη
σαλάμβην
σίκλος
Σκόμβροι
στιβάδα ποιούμενος
στομώδη (εὔστομα καὶ εὔφημα)
στραβαλοκόμαν
Τεγεάς
τέως (πρότερον, πρὸ μικροῦ)
τολύπαι
τροπαία
Τυφῶ
ὕπουλος (sc. ὁ δούρειος ἵππος)
ὑψαυχεῖν
φαικῷ
φαρκῖδα
φαρμακῶνες
Φθιῶτις (Τραχίσ)
φίλανδρος (de Atalanta)
χειμάμυνα
χλωρανθείς
χνοῦς
ὡρκωμότηκεν
ἀχείρωτον
δίκαιος γόνος
¯ ἐγὼ μάγειρος ἀρτύσω σοφῶς
ἔχε τὸ δελήτιον
Βουθοία
κυρεῖν δρῶ̣ντα δηλοῦν τί; χρη[
ἐργάτην τοιοῦδ’ ἀγῶνος αἰχμαλ̣[ωτ

‹]ΟΙΝΕΥΣ·› ἀλλ’ ἐξεροῦμεν. ἀλλὰ πρῶτα βούλομ[αι
γνῶναι τίνες π̣[ά]ρεστε καὶ γένους ὅ̣[του
βλαστόντες· οὐ γ[ὰρ] γ̣ῦν γέ πω μαθ[

ΧΟ. ΣΑΤΥΡΩΝ·
ἅ̣παντα πεύσῃ‹ι·› γ̣ύμφιοι μὲν ἥ̣[κομε]ν,
παῖδες δὲ νυμφῶν, Βακχίου δ’ ὑπηρέται,
θεῶν δ’ ὅμαυλοι· πᾶσα δ’ ἥρμοσται τέχνη
πρέπουσ’ ἐν ἡμῖν· ἔστι μὲν τὰ πρὸς μάχην
10 δορός, πάλης ἀγῶνες, ἱππικῆς, δρόμου,
πυγμῆς, ὀδόντων, ὅρχεων ἀποστροφαί,
ἔνεισι δ’ ᾠδαὶ μουσικῆς, ἔνεστι δὲ
μαντεῖα π̣αντάγνωτα κοὐκ ἐψευσμένα,
ἰαμάτων τ’ ἔλεγχος, ἔστιν οὐρανοῦ
15 μέτρησις, ἔστ’ ὄρχησις, ἔστι τῶν κάτω
λάλησις· ἆρ’ ἄκαρπος ἡ θεωρία;
ὧν σοι λαβεῖν ἔξεστι τοῦθ’ ὁποῖον ἂν
χρῄζῃς, ἐὰν τὴν παῖδα [π]ροστιθῇς ἐμοί.
]ΟΙΝΕΥΣ· ἀλλ’ οὐχὶ μεμπτὸν τὸ γένος. ἀλλὰ βούλομαι
20 καὶ τ̣όνδ’ ἀθρῆσαι πρῶτο̣[ν] ὅστις ἔρχεται
[φρο]ῦδον οὐδ’ ἀποδερκ̣[
]ασω χθονὸς σεληνᾳ̣[
]ου τὸ φῶς βέβηκεν, οἴχε̣τᾳ̣[ι
]λλη τι νυκτὸς ἄστρο̣ν η[
[θ]νή‹ι›σκει πρὸς αὐγὴν ἡ̣λίο̣[υ
25 [ἐ]κπνεῖ δὲ τόνδ’ αὖ μέλανα βο̣[
[ ]σ̣ο̣να πρόφρων ἰδέ με πα[
[ ].’ εὐᾴ̣[.].ς φυγάδα τ̣οτ.[
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[]σ̣τροβεισοφ[
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[]̣ικέσθαι καπ̣[

5 [ ]σις βα.[
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ὐφ’ οὐ̣[
ὠδῖν̣[
ἀποσπάσεις μ̣[
τῶνδ’ οὕνεκ’ ἠ[
Φοῖν̣ι̣ξ̣, ὁρᾷσ..[
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[ ]τ’ ἂν εἰ φων.[..]σηδ̣[
[]. κυρίως κεκλ̣[η]μένον
[ ]στι· τ̣ὴν γὰρ ὐ̣[στ]άτην
[ ]ιαν εἴργων ὁδὸν
[ἀν]ὴρ κλύων σοφὸς
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[τε]τ̣ραζυγεῖς ὄχ̣[ους
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[ ]σαν ὅ γε
[].σαν περὶ σοῦ̣
[].η καλὸν ἢ
[ ]ε.[.].ν·
[ ]ο̣ισθ’ ἃ λέγω
10 [ ]’ εἶφ’ ὅ τι μοι
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[]λα δὲ τ̣ῶν αἰθερίων [
[]οῦσσα πλᾶξις οἰωνῶ̣ν [
[π]ο̣ικίλ̣ος κέκλαγγεν[
[ ].ω̣ κρόκω̣ λοπ̣ίζων[
[].ων κατ̣ὰ σηκὸν οικε.[

10 [].̣..τις ἄμιῳ [γ]ενέτωρ [
[]οικος ἔ̣ξω .[.]ο̣.ων
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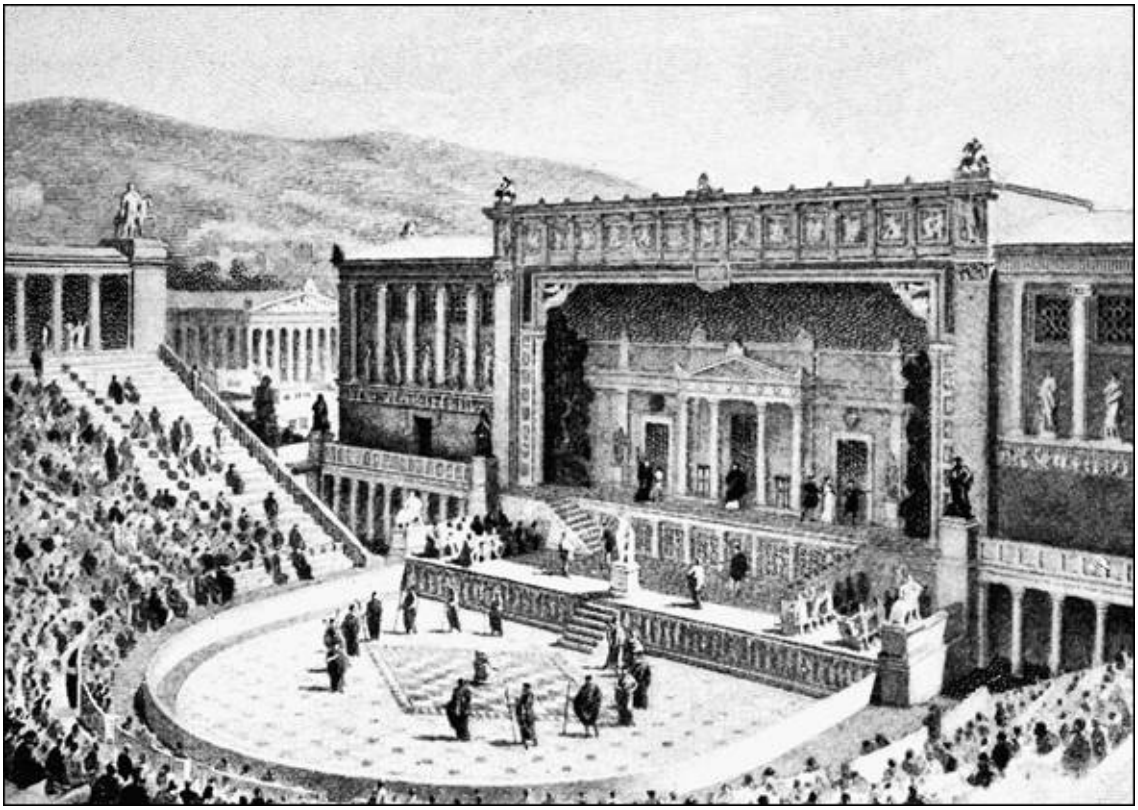
χαλκοσκελεῖς γὰρ [
¯]ὲν ἐκπνέουσι πλευμόνων ἄπο·

φλέγει δὲ μυκτήρ, ὥσ[
καὶ τῶν πρὸς εἵλην ἰχθύων ὠπτημένων
πενία δὲ τοῖς ἔχουσιν οὐ σμικρὰ νόσος
ποδαπὸς ἦν τὴν φύσιν;
σιωπῆς οὐδὲν ἄμεινον
ἀπολοίμιον φανόν
ὀμμάτειος πόθος
ῥακτηρίοις κέντροισιν
τοῦ Προμηθέως ἀντέχεσθαι καὶ μὴ τῆς μεταμελείασ
Ἀανῖτισ()
ἀγήρω (masc.)
ἀκοσμεῖν
ἀναπολεῖ
ἀπόδρομον
αὐτόν
διακονούμενος
ἰδιῶτις
ἱπποβουκόλοι
μουνομήτορι
ξυμφορά
πέλλυτρα
χειρώνακτες
χρῆν (infin.)

The Biographies

The Theatre of Dionysus in Athens, where Sophocles' plays were first performed



A modern reconstruction of how the theatre may have appeared in Sophocles' time

INTRODUCTION TO SOPHOCLES by F. Storr

SALAMIS, one of the decisive battles of the world, which saved not only Greece but western civilization, is a connecting link between the three great Attic tragedians. Aeschylus, then in his prime, fought himself and celebrated the victory in his *Persae;* Sophocles, a boy of fifteen, was chosen for his beauty and musical skill as leader of the youthful choir who danced and sang a paean round the trophy; and Euripides, according to tradition, was born on the very day of the battle.

In his art, no less than in his age, Sophocles stands half way between the primitive faith and large utterance of Aeschylus, the "superman," and the lyric pathos, "the touch of all things human," of Euripides the Rationalist.

Of his private life, if we neglect later myth and gossip, there is little to tell. As Phrynicus wrote shortly after his death, "Thus happily ended a life without one mishap." He was born at Colonus (495 B.C.), that deme of Athens which he afterwards immortalized in what Cicero pronounced the sweetest of all lyrics, and his father Sophilus, a well-to-do Athenian (probably a master-cutler), gave him the best education of the day in music, dancing, and gymnastics. Endowed with every gift of nature, both physical and mental, from the very first, he carried all before him. When he began to dramatize we know not, but in 468 he won the first prize, probably with the *Triptolemus,* a lost play, and there is no reason to doubt the story that it was awarded to him by Cimon, the successful general to whom the Archon Eponymus of the year deferred the decision.

The year 410 B.C. was to Sophocles what A.D. 1850 was to Tennyson, the grand climacteric of his life. After, and partly at least in consequence of his *Antigone,* which took the town by storm, he was appointed one of the ten strategi sent with Pericles to reduce the aristocratic revolt in Samos. If the poet won no fresh laurels in the field he did not forfeit the esteem and admiration of his countrymen, who conferred on him various posts of distinction, just as the age of Queen Anne rewarded Addison and Prior with secretaryships, or as the United States sent us Lowell as ambassador. He was President of the *'Ellenotamiai'* or Imperial Treasurers of the tribute. After the Sicilian disaster in 413 he was appointed a member of the 'Probouloi' or Committee of Public Safety. The pretty story told by Cicero in the *De Senectute* of his last appearance in public in extreme old age and his triumphant acquittal by the jury is too familiar to be repeated, and is probably a fiction, but it serves as evidence of his popularity to the very end. He had seen the rise of Athens and identified himself with her

glory, and he was spared by a happy death from witnessing her final fall at the battle of Aegospotami (405 B.C.).

"His life was gentle." *Gentle* is the word by which critics ancient and modern have agreed to characterize him. The epitaph is Shakespeare's, and Ben Jonson applies it to Shakespeare himself, but it fits even more aptly the sweet singer of Colonus, in whom "the elements were so mixed" as to form what the Greeks expressed by 'eukolos'. In the famous line of Aristophanes:

Sweet-tempered as on earth, so here below.

The one aspersion on his character is that in his younger days he was a passionate lover, but the charge rests on a passage in the opening scene of the *Republic* of Plato which will bear a milder interpretation. When Sophocles, as there reported, expressed his satisfaction at escaping from a savage and tyrannous monster, he surely did not mean that he had been a libertine, but that old age had removed him from temptations to which he may never have succumbed. In all antiquity there is not a purer-minded poet, and (as in the case of Virgil and Shakespeare) we may discredit and ignore the unsavoury gossip of Athenaeus and the scandal-mongers of a later age.

Since his death the fame of Sophocles has grown and never suffered eclipse. To Aristotle no less than to Aristophanes he is the greatest of dramatists, and in the Poetics the *Oedipus Rex* is held up as the model of a tragedy. To Virgil who freely imitated him "the buskin of Sophocles" is a synonym for dramatic perfection. Racine and Lessing prized him no less highly, and Sophocles was the volume that Shelley carried with him to his watery grave.

The *Merope* of Matthew Arnold is a far-off echo of the *Electra* of Sophocles, and no finer or truer tribute has been paid to a poet than the sonnet in which Arnold renders his special thanks to him

"Whose even-balanced soul,
From first youth tested up to extreme old age,
Business could not make dull, nor passion wild;

Who saw life steadily, and saw it whole,
The mellow glory of the Attic stage,
Singer of sweet Colonus and its child."

For a discussion of the genius of Sophocles as a dramatist and a poet, his relation to his older and younger contemporary, his religious and political creed, we must be content to refer our readers to the Bibliography, but a few words may be permitted on his language as it affects the translator. Dr. Warren has pronounced Sophocles "the least translatable and the least imitable of the Greeks," and it is in the second epithet that the translator may find his best excuse for attempting the impossible. Greek critics assigned to Sophocles in his maturity "the common or middle diction," that is, a diction half way between the pomp of Aeschylus and the language of everyday prose, and Wordsworth might have taken him to illustrate the canon laid down in his Preface to "Lyrical Ballads." Coleridge might no less have chosen Sophocles to refute that canon. The words themselves are familiar in men's ears, but in Sophocles they have gained a new significance, sometimes simply from their collocation, sometimes by a reversion to their first meanings, oftener because (as in Virgil) they denote one thing and connote others. It is no paradox to say that the ease, the simplicity, the seeming transparency of the language, constitute the translator's main difficulty. In the present instance he is painfully conscious of his failure to preserve this simplicity and transfer these latent meanings, but he has sought to be faithful and the prospect of the text facing him has been a righteous terror. At the same time he has held as a first principle that, whatever else it is, a translation must be English, that is to say, it must be intelligible and enjoyable without a knowledge of the original.

One or two instances may be given from the *Oedipus Rex*. Line 67 is literally rendered by Jebb, "I have gone many ways in the wanderings of thought," but to a Greek scholar it is no less sublime than, in another style, Milton's "thoughts that wander through eternity." To convey this sublimity in another tongue is as hard as it would be to render in French "Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean." Lines 736-7 are the turning point, the climax, as it were, of the play, but in language they hardly differ from prose:— "As I heard you speak just now, lady, what wandering of the soul what upheaval of the mind, have come upon me!" The second point may be illustrated from a recent version of the play by an eminent Professor. He begins,

“Fresh brood of bygone Cadmus, children dear,
What is this posture of your sessions here —
Betufted on your supplicating rods?”

We defy any Englishman without a knowledge of the Greek to make any sense of the third line. So with the Choruses. To preserve in rhyme the correspondence of Strophe and Antistrophe (Turn and Counterturn they are here called), is at best an exhibition of tight-rope dancing.

These seven plays are all that are left to us of some 120, except in fragments and a considerable portion of a Satyric Drama, the’Ixneutai’ or Trackers. The order in which they were composed and produced is largely a matter of conjecture. All we know for certain is that the *Antigone* was the first (some, however, put the *Ajax* before it), and the *Oedipus Coloneus,* produced by the poet’s grandson, three years after the death of Sophocles, was the last of the seven. The following may be taken as an approximation: — *Antigone*, *Electra*, *Ajax*, *Oedipus Rex*, *Trachiniae*, *Philoctetes*, *Oedipus Coloneus.*

The Greek text is based on Dindorf (latest edition), but this has been carefully collated with Jebb’s edition and in most cases the English has been preferred to the German editor.

It remains to express my deep obligations not only to the text but to the commentary and prose translation of the great scholar who for more than forty years honoured me with his friendship. I have not consciously borrowed from his rendering, but there is hardly a line in which I am not indebted to him for a fuller appreciation of the meaning and significance.

To three other life-long friends, all three rival translators of Sophocles in whole or in part, I am indebted for generous help and counsel. Sir George Young, Mr. E. D. A. Morshead, and Professor Gilbert Murray read and freely criticized my first essay which has been kept for more than the statutory nine years of Horace, and it was their encouragement that made me persevere in what has proved the pleasantest of all holiday tasks.

SOPHOCLES by T. W. Lumb

In Aeschylus' dramas the will of the gods tended to override human responsibility. An improvement could be effected by making the personages real captains of their souls; drama needed bringing down from heaven to earth. This process was effected by Sophocles. He was born at Colonus, near Athens, in 495, mixed with the best society in Periclean times, was a member of the important board of administrators who controlled the Delian League, the nucleus of the Athenian Empire, and composed over one hundred tragedies. In 468 he defeated Aeschylus, won the first prize twenty-two times and later had to face the more formidable opposition of the new and restless spirit whose chief spokesman was Euripides. For nearly forty years he was taken to be the typical dramatist of Athens, being nicknamed "the Bee"; his dramatic powers showed no abatement of vigour in old age, of which the *Oedipus Coloneus* was the triumphant issue. He died in 405, full of years and honours.

Providence has ordained it that his art, like his country's tutelary goddess Athena, should step perfect and fully armed from the brain of its creator. The *Antigone,* produced in 440, discusses one of the deepest problems of civilised life. On the morning after the defeat of the Seven who assaulted Thebes Polyneices' body lay dishonoured and unburied, a prey to carrion birds before the gates of the city which had been his home. His two sisters, Antigone and Ismene, discuss the edict which forbids his burial. Ismene, the more timid of the two, intends to obey it, but Antigone's stronger character rises in rebellion.

Loss of burial was the most awful fate which could overtake a Greek — before he died Sophocles was to see his country condemn ten generals to death for neglect of burial rites, though they had been brilliantly successful in a naval engagement. Rather than obey Antigone would die.

> "Bury him I will; I will lie in death with the brother I love,
> sinning in a righteous cause. Far longer is the time in which I
> must please the dead than men on earth, for among the former I
> shall dwell for ever. Do thou, if it please thee, hold in dishonour
> what is honoured by Heaven."

Here is the source of the tragedy, the will of the individual in conflict with established authority.

A chorus of Theban elders enters, singing an ode of deliverance and joy; they have been summoned by Creon, the new King, uncle of Oedipus' children. Full of the sense of his own importance Creon states the official view. Polyneices is to remain unburied.

> "Any man who considers private friendship to be more important than the State is a man of naught. In the name of all-seeing Zeus I would not hold my tongue if I saw ruin coming to the citizens instead of safety, nor would I make a friend of my country's enemy. Sure am I that it is the State that saves us; she is the ship that carries us; we make our friendships without overturning her."

The elders promise obedience, but grave news is reported by a guard who has been set to watch the corpse. Someone had scattered dust lightly over the dead and departed without leaving any trace; neither he nor his companions had done the deed.

When the Chorus suggest that it is the work of some deity, Creon answers in great impatience:

> "Cease, lest thou be proved a fool as well as old. Thy words are intolerable when thou sayest that the gods can have a care of this corpse. What, have they buried him in honour for his services to them? Did he not come to burn their pillared temples and offerings and precincts and shatter our laws?"

He angrily thrusts the watchman forth, threatening to hang him and his

companions alive unless they find the culprit.

> “There are many marvels, but none greater than Man. He crosses the wintry sea, he wears away the hard earth with his plough, ensnareth the light-hearted race of birds, catcheth the wild beasts, trappeth the things of the deep, yoketh the horse and the unwearying ox. He hath taught himself speech and thought swift as the wind, hath learnt the moods of a city life and can avoid the shafts of the frost; he hath a device for every problem save Death — though disease he can escape. Sometimes he moveth to ill, again to good; his cities rear their heads when they reverence the laws and the gods; he wreckeths his city when he boldly forsakes the good. May an evil-doer never share my hearth or heart.”

Such is the ordinary man’s view of the action of Polyneices, for in Sophocles the Chorus certainly represents average public opinion. It is quickly challenged by the entry of Antigone with the Watchman, whose story Creon hastens out to hear. With no little self-satisfaction the Watchman tells how they caught the girl in the very act of replacing the dust they had removed and pouring libations over the dead. Antigone admits the deed. When asked how she dare defy the official ordinance, she replies —

> “It came neither from Zeus nor from Justice, nor did I deem that thy decrees had such power that a mortal could override the unwritten and unshaken laws of Heaven. These have not their life from now or yesterday, but from everlasting, and no man knows whence they have appeared. It was not likely that, through fear of any man’s will, I would pay Heaven’s penalty for their infringement. Die I must, even hadst thou made no proclamation; if I die before my time, I count it all gain. If my act seem folly to thee, maybe it is a foolish judge who counts me mad.”

Creon replies that this is sheer insolence; it is an insult that he, a man, should give way to a woman. He threatens to destroy both girls, but Antigone is sure that public opinion is with her, though for the moment it is muzzled through fear. Ismene is brought in and offers to die with her sister; Antigone refuses her offer, insisting that she alone has deserved chastisement.

In a second ode the gradual extinction of Oedipus' race is described, owing to foolish word and insensate thought, for "when Heaven leads a man to ruin it makes him believe that evil is good". A new interest is added by Creon's son Haemon, the affianced lover of Antigone, who comes to interview his father. This is the first instance in European drama of that without which much modern literature would have little reason for existing at all — the love element, wisely kept in check by the Greeks. A further conflict of wills adds to the dramatic effect of the play; Creon insists on filial obedience, for he cannot claim to rule a city if he fails to control his own family. Haemon answers with courtesy and deference; he points out that the force of public opinion is behind Antigone and suggests that the official view may perhaps be wrong because it is the expression of an individual's judgment. When he is himself charged thus directly with the very fault for which he claimed to punish Antigone, Creon lets his temper get the mastery; after a violent quarrel Haemon parts from him with a dark threat that the girl's death will remove more than one person, and vows never to cross his father's doorstep again.

Antigone is soon carried away to her doom; she is to be shut up in a cavern without food. In a dialogue of great beauty she confesses her human weakness — death is near, and with it banishment from the joys of life. Creon bids her make an end; her last speech concludes with a clear statement of the problem. Who knows if she is right? She herself will know after death. If she has erred, she will confess it; if the King is wrong, she prays he may not suffer greater woes than her own.

A reaction now occurs. Teiresias, the blind seer, seeks out Creon because of the failure of his sacrificial rites; the birds of the air are gorged with human blood, and fail to give the signs of augury. He bids Creon return to his right senses and quit his stubbornness. When the latter mockingly accuses the seer of being bribed, he learns the dread punishment his obstinacy has brought him.

> “Know that thou shalt not see out many hurrying rounds of the sun before thou shalt give one sprung from thine own loins in exchange for the dead, one in return for two, for thou hast thrust below one of the children of the light, penning up her spirit in a tomb with dishonour, and thou keepest above ground a body that belongs to the gods below, without its share of funerals, unrighteously; wherefore the late-punishing ruinous gods of death and the Furies lie in wait for thee, to catch thee in like agonies.”

Cowed by the terror, the King hurries to undo his work, calling for pickaxes to open the tomb and himself going with all speed to set free its victim.

The sequel is told by a messenger who at the outset strikes a note of woe.

> “Creon I once envied, for he was the saviour of his land, and was the father of noble children. Now all is lost. When men lose pleasure, I deem that they are not alive but moving corpses. Heap up wealth and live in kingly state, but if there is no pleasure withal, I would not pay the worth of a shadow for all the rest. Haemon is dead.”

Hearing the news, Eurydice the Queen comes out, and bids him tell his story in full. Creon found Haemon clasping the body of Antigone who had hung herself. Seeing his father, he made a murderous attack on him; when it failed, he drew his sword and fell on it — thus in death the two lovers were not separated. In an ominous silence the Queen departs. Creon enters with his son’s body, to be utterly shattered by a second and an unexpected blow, for his wife has slain herself. Broken and helpless he admits his fault, while the Chorus sing in conclusion: —

> “By far the greatest part of happiness is wisdom; men should reverence the gods; mighty plagues repay the mighty words of the over-proud, teaching wisdom to the aged.”

To Aeschylus the power that largely controlled men’s acts was Destiny. A notable contrast is visible in the system of Sophocles. Destiny does not disappear, rather it retires into the background of his thought. To him the leading cause of ruin is evil counsel. Over and over again this teaching is driven home. All the leading characters mention it, Antigone, Haemon, Teiresias, and when it is disregarded, it is remorselessly brought home by disaster. The dramatic gain is enormous; man’s sorrows are ascribed primarily to his own lack of judgment, the tragic character takes on a more human shape, for he is more nearly related to the ordinary persons we meet in our own experience. Another great advance is visible in the construction of the plot. It is more varied, more flexible; it never ceases developing, the action continuing to the end instead of stopping short at a climax. Further, the Chorus begins to fall into a more humble position, it exercises but little influence on the great figures of the plot, being content to mirror the opinions of the interested outside spectator. Truly drama is beginning to be master of itself— “the play’s the thing”.

But far more important is the subject of this play. It raises one of the most difficult problems which demand a solution, the harmonisation of private judgment with state authority. The individual in a growing civilisation sooner or later asks how far he ought to obey, who is the lord over his convictions, whether disobedience is ever justifiable. If a law is wrong how are we to make its immorality evident? In an age when a central authority is questioned or loses its hold on men’s allegiance, this problem will imperiously demand an answer. When Europe was aroused from the slumber of the Middle Ages and the spiritual authority which had governed it for centuries was shattered, the same right of resistance as that which Antigone claimed was insisted upon by various reformers. It did not fail to bring with it tragic consequences, for the “power beareth not the sword in vain”. Its sequel was the Thirty Years’ War which barbarised central Germany, leaving in many places a race of savage beings who had once been human. In our own days resistance is preached almost as a sacred duty. We have passive resisters, conscientious objectors, strikers and a host of young and imperfectly educated persons, some armed with the very serious

power of voting, who claim to set their wills in flat opposition to recognised authority. One or two contributions to the solution of this problem may be found in the *Antigone*. The central authority must be prepared to prove that its edicts are not below the moral standard of the age; on the other hand, non-compliance must be backed by the force of public opinion; it must show that the action it takes will ultimately bring good to the whole community. It is of little use to appeal to the so-called conscience unless we can produce some credentials of the proper training and enlightenment of that rather vague and uncertain faculty, whose normal province is to condemn wrong acts, not to justify law-breaking. Most resisters talk the very language of Antigone, appealing to the will of Heaven; would that they could prove as satisfactorily as she did that the power behind them is that which governs the world in righteousness.

A somewhat similar problem reappears in the *Ajax*. This play opens at early dawn with a dialogue between Athena, who is unseen, and Odysseus; the latter has traced Ajax to his tent after a night of madness in which he has slain much cattle and many shepherds, imagining them to be his foes, especially Odysseus himself who had worsted him in the contest for the arms of Achilles. Athena calls out the beaten hero for a moment and the sight of him moves Odysseus to say: —

> "I pity him, though my foe; for I think of mine own self as much as of him. We men are but shadows, all of us, or fleeting shades."

To this Athena replies: —

> "When thou seest such sights, utter no haughty word against the gods and be not roused to pride, if thou art mightier than another in strength or store of wealth. One day can bring down or exalt all human state, but the gods love the prudent and hate the sinners."

A band of mariners from Salamis enter as the chorus; they are Ajax' followers who have come to learn the truth. They are confronted by Tecmessa, Ajax' captive, who confirms the grievous rumour, describing his mad acts. When the fit was over, she had left him in his tent prostrate with grief and shame among the beasts he had slain, longing for vengeance on his enemies before he died.

The business of the play now begins. Coming forth, Ajax in a long despairing speech laments his lot — persecuted by Athena, hated of Greeks and Trojans alike, the secret laughter of his enemies.

Where shall he go? Home to the father he has disgraced? Against Troy, leading a forlorn hope? He had already reminded Tecmessa with some sternness that silence is a woman's best grace; now she appeals to his pity. Bereft of him, she would speedily be enslaved and mocked; their son would be left defenceless; the many kindnesses she had done him cry for some return from a man of chivalrous nature, Ajax bade her be of good cheer; she must obey him in all things and first must bring his son Eurysaces. Taking him in his arms, he says: —

> "If he is my true son, he will not quail at the sight of blood.
> But he must speedily be broken into his father's warrior habit
> and imitate his ways. My son, I pray thou mayest be happier than
> thy sire, but like him otherwise, then thou shalt be no churl.
> Yet herein I envy thee that thou canst not feel my agonies. Life
> is sweetest in its careless years before it learns joy and pain;
> but when thou art come to that, show thy father's enemies thy
> nature and birth. Till then feed on the spirit of gladness,
> gambol in the life of boyhood and gladden thy mother's heart."

He reflects that his son will be safe as long as Teucer lives, whom he charges on his return to take the boy to his own father and mother to be their joy. His arms shall not be a prize to be striven for; they should be buried with him except his shield, which his son should take and keep. This ominous speech dashes the hopes which he had raised in Tecmessa's heart, even the Chorus sadly admitting that death is the best for a brainsick man, born of the highest blood, no longer

true to his character.

Ajax re-enters, a sword in his hands. He feels his heart touched by Tecmessa's words and pities her helplessness. He resolves to go to the shore and there bury the accursed sword he had of Hector, which had robbed him of his peace. He will soon learn obedience to the gods and his leaders; all the powers of Nature are subject to authority, the seasons, the sea, night and sleep. He has but now learned that an enemy is to be hated as one who will love us later, while friendship will not always abide. Yet all will be well; he will go the journey he cannot avoid; soon all will hear that his evil destiny has brought him salvation. This splendid piece of tragic irony is interpreted at its surface value by the Chorus, who burst into a song of jubilation. But the words have a darker meaning; this transient joy is but the last flicker of hope before it is quenched in everlasting night.

A messenger brings the news that Teucer, Ajax' brother, on his return to the camp from a raid was nearly stoned to death as the kinsman of the army's foe. He inquires where Ajax is; hearing that he had gone out to make atonement, he knows the terror that is to come. Chalcas the seer adjured Teucer to use all means in his power to keep Ajax in his tent that day, for in it alone Athena's wrath would persecute him. She had punished him with madness for two proud utterances. On leaving his father he had boasted he would win glory in spite of Heaven, and later had bidden Athena assist the other Greeks, for the line would never break where he stood. Such was his pride, and such its punishment. Tecmessa hurries in and sends some to fetch Teucer, others to go east and west to seek out her lord. The scene rapidly changes to the shore, where Ajax cries to the gods, imprecates his foes, prays to Death, and after a remembrance of his native land falls on his sword.

The Chorus enter in two bands, but find nothing. Tecmessa discovers the body in a brake, and hides it under her robe. Distracted and haunted by the dread of slavery and ridicule, she gives way to grief. Teucer enters to learn of the tragedy; after dispatching Tecmessa to save the child while there is yet time, he reflects on his own state. Telamon his father will cast him off for being absent in his brother's hour of weakness whom he loved as his own life. Sadly he bears out the truth of Ajax utterance, that a foe's gifts are fraught with ruin; the belt that Ajax gave Hector served to tie his feet to Achilles' car — and Hector's sword was in his brother's heart.

The plot now appeals to fiercer passions. Menelaus entering commands Teucer to leave the corpse where it is, for an enemy shall receive no burial. He strikes the same note as Creon: —

> “It is the mark of an ill-conditioned man that he, a commoner, should see fit to disobey the powers that be. Law cannot prosper in a city where there is no settled fear; where a man trembles and is loyal, there is salvation; when he is insolent and does as he will, his city soon or late will sink to ruin.”

Teucer answers that Ajax never was a subject, but was always an equal. He fought, not for Helen, but for his oath’s sake. The dispute waxes hot; the calm dignity of Teucer easily discomfits the Spartan braggart, who departs to bring aid. Meanwhile Tecmessa returns with the child whom Teucer in a scene of consummate pathos bids kneel at his father’s side, holding in his hand a triple lock of hair — Teucer’s, his mother’s, his own; this sacred symbol, if violated, would bring a curse on any who dared outrage him. While the Chorus sing a song full of longings for home, Agamemnon advances to the place, followed by Teucer. The King is deliberately insolent, reviling Teucer for the stain on his birth. In reply the latter in a great speech reminds him that there was a time when the flames licked the Greek ships and there was none to save them but Ajax, who had faced Hector single-handed. With kindling passion he hurls the taunt of a stained birth back on Agamemnon and plainly tells him that Ajax shall be buried and that the King will rue any attempt at violence. Odysseus comes in to hear the quarrel. He admits that he had once been the foe of the dead man, who yet had no equal in bravery except Achilles. For all that, enmity in men should end where death begins. Astonished at this defence of a foe, Agamemnon argues a little with Odysseus, who gently reminds him that one day he too will need burial. This human appeal obtains the necessary permission; Odysseus, left alone with Teucer, offers him friendship. Too much overcome by surprise and joy to say many words, Teucer accepts his friendship and the play ends with a ray of sunlight after storm and gloom.

Once more Sophocles has filled every inch of his canvas. The plot never flags and has no diminuendo after the death of Ajax. The cause of the tragedy is not plainly indicated at the outset; with a skill which is masterly, Sophocles represents in the opening scene Athena and Odysseus as beings purely odious, mocking a great man’s fall. With the progress of the action these two characters

recover their dignity; Athena has just cause for her anger, while Odysseus obtains for the dead his right of burial. We should notice further how the pathos of this fine play is heightened by the conception of the “one day” which brought ruin to a noble warrior. Had he been kept within his tent that one day — had this fatal day been known, the ruin need not have happened. “The pity of it”, the needless waste of human life, what a theme is there for a tragedy!

The *Ajax* has never exercised an acknowledged influence on literature. It was a favourite with the Greeks, but modern writers have strangely overlooked it. For us it has a good lesson. Here was a hero, born in an island, who unaided saved a fleet when his allies were forced back on their trenches and beyond them to the sea. His reward was such as Wordsworth tells of: —

Alas! the gratitude of men
Has oftener left me mourning.

We remember many a long month of agony during which another island kept destruction from a fleet and saved her allies withal. In some quarters this island has received the gratitude which Ajax had; her friends asked, “What has England done in the war, anyhow?” If it befits anybody to answer, it must be England’s Teucer, who has built another Salamis overseas, just as he did. Our kindred across the oceans will give us the reward of praise; for us the chastisement of Ajax may serve to reinforce the warning which is to be found on the lips of not the least of our own poets: —

“For frantic boast and foolish word
Thy mercy on Thy people, Lord.”

The *Electra* is Sophocles’ version of the revenge of Orestes which Aeschylus described in the *Choephori* and is useful as affording a comparison between the methods of the two masters. An aged tutor at early dawn enters the scene with Orestes to whom he shows his father’s palace and then departs with him to offer libations at the dead king’s tomb. Electra with a Chorus of Argive girls comes forward, the former describing the insolent conduct of Clytemnestra who holds high revelry on the anniversary of her husband’s death and curses Electra for saving Orestes. Chrysothemis, another daughter, comes out to talk with Electra; she is of a different mould, gentle and timid like Ismene, and warns Electra that in consequence of her obstinacy in revering her father’s memory Aegisthus intends to shut her up in a rocky cavern as soon as he returns. She advises her to use good counsel, then departs to pour on Agamemnon’s tomb some libations

which Clytemnestra offers in consequence of a dream.

The Queen finds Electra ranging abroad as usual in the absence of Aegisthus. She defends the murder of her husband, but is easily refuted by Electra who points out that, if it is right to exact a life for a life, she ought to suffer death herself. Clytemnestra prays to Apollo to avert the omen of her dream, her prayer seemingly being answered immediately by the entry of the old tutor who comes to inform her of the death of Orestes, killed at Delphi in a chariot race which he brilliantly describes. Torn by her emotions, Clytemnestra can be neither glad nor sorry.

> "Shall I call this happy news, or dreadful but profitable? Hapless am I, if I save my life at the cost of my own miseries. Strong is the tie of motherhood; no parent hates a child even if outraged by him. Yet, now that he is gone, I shall have rest and peace from his threats."

Hearing so circumstantial a proof of her brother's death, Electra is plunged into the depths of misery.

But soon Chrysothemis returns in a state of high excitement. She has found a lock of Orestes' hair and some offerings at the tomb. Electra quickly informs her that her elation is groundless, for their brother is dead; she suggests that they two should strike the murderers, but Chrysothemis recoils in horror from the plot. Then Orestes enters with a casket in his hand; this he gives to Electra, saying it contains the mortal remains of the dead prince. In utter hopelessness Electra takes it and soliloquises over it. Seeing her misery, Orestes cannot refrain; gently taking the casket from her he gradually reveals himself. The tutor enters and recalls him to their immediate business. Electra asks who the stranger is and learns that it is the very man to whom she gave the infant boy her brother. The three advance to the palace which Orestes enters to dispatch his mother, Electra bidding him smite with double force, wishing only that Aegisthus were with her mother.

The end of Aegisthus himself is contrived with Sophoclean art. He comes in hurriedly to find the two strangers who have proof of Orestes' death.

Electra tells him they are in the palace; they have not only told her of the dead

Orestes, but have shown him to her; Aegisthus himself can see the unenviable sight; he can rejoice at it, if there is any joy in it. Exulting, he sings a note of triumph at the removal of his fears and threatens to chastise all who try henceforth to thwart his will. He dashes open the door, and there sees the Queen lying dead. Orestes bids him enter the palace, to be slain on the very spot where his father was murdered.

Fortune has been kind in preserving us this play. The great difference between the art of Sophocles and that of Aeschylus is here apparent. Only one man has ventured to paint for us Aeschylus' Clytemnestra; Leighton has revealed her, stern as Nature herself, remorseless, armed with a sword to smite first, then argue if she can find time to do so. Sophocles' Clytemnestra is a woman, lost as soon as she begins to reason out her misdeeds. She prays to Apollo in secret, for fear lest Electra may overhear her prayer and make it void. But the crudity of Aeschylus' resources did not satisfy Sophocles, whose taste demanded a contrast to heighten the character of his heroine and found one in the Homeric story that Agamemnon had a second daughter. Aeschylus' stern nature did not shrink from the sight of a meeting between mother and son; Sophocles closed the doors upon the act of vengeance, though he represents Electra as encouraging her brother from outside the palace. The Aegisthus incident maintains the interest to the end in the masterly Sophoclean style of refined and searching irony. The tone of the play is singular; from misery it at first sinks to hopelessness, then to despair, and finally it soars to triumphant joy. Such a dangerous venture was unattempted before.

The most lovable woman in Greek literature is the heroine of the next play, the *Trachiniae*, produced at an uncertain date. Deianeira had been won and wed by Heracles; after a brief spell of happiness she found herself left more and more alone as her husband's labours called him away from her. For fifteen months she had heard no news of him. Her nurse suggests that she should send her eldest son to Euboea to seek him out, a rumour being abroad that he has reached that island. The mother in her loneliness is comforted by a band of girls of Trachis, the scene of the action. But her uneasiness is too great to be cheered; she describes the strange curse of womanhood: —

> "When it is young it groweth in a clime of its own, plagued by no heat of the sun nor rain nor wind; in careless gaiety it builds up its days till it is no longer maid, but wife; then in the night it

hath its meed of cares, terrified for lord or children. Only such a one can know from the sight of her own sorrows what is my burden of grief."

But there is a deeper cause for anxiety; Heracles had said that if he did not return in fifteen months he would either die or be rid for ever of his labours; that very hour had come.

News reached her that Heracles is alive and triumphant; Lichas was coming to give fuller details. Very soon he enters with a band of captive maidens, telling how his master had been kept in slavery in Lydia; shaking off the yoke, he had sacked and destroyed the city of Eurytus who had caused his captivity, the girls were Heracles' offering of the spoils to Deianeira. Filled with pity at their lot, she looked closely at them and was attracted by one of them, a silent girl of noble countenance. Lichas when questioned denied all knowledge of her identity and departed. When he had gone, the messenger desired private speech with Deianeira. Lichas had lied; the girl was Iole, daughter of Eurytus; it was for her sake that his master destroyed the city, for he loved the maid and intended to keep her in his home to be a rival to his wife. Lichas on coming out was confronted by the messenger, and attempted to dissemble, but Deianeira appealed to him thus: —

"Nay, deceive me not. Thou shalt not speak to a woman of evil heart, who knoweth not the ways of men, how that they by a law of their own being delight not always in the same thing. 'Tis a fool who standeth up to battle against Love who ruleth even gods as he will, and me too; then why not another such as I? Therefore if I revile my lord when taken with this plague, I am crazed indeed — or this woman is, who hath brought me no shame or sorrow. If my lord teacheth thee to lie, thy lesson is no good one; if thou art schooling thyself to falsehood in a desire to be kind to me, thou shalt prove unkind. Speak all the truth; it is an ignoble lot for a man of honour to be called false."

Completely won by this appeal, Lichas confesses the truth.

During the singing of a choral ode Deianeira has had time to reflect. The reward of her loyalty is to take a second place. The girl is young and her beauty is fast ripening; she herself is losing her charm. But no prudent woman should fly into a passion; happily she has a remedy, for in the first days of her wedded life Heracles had shot Nessus, a half-human monster, for insulting her. Before he died Nessus bade her steep her robe in his blood and treasure it as a certain charm for recovering his waning affection. Summoning Lichas, she gives him strict orders to take the robe to Heracles who was to allow no light of the sun or fire to fall upon it before wearing it. After a short interval, she returns in the greatest agitation; a little tuft of wool which she had anointed with the monster's blood had caught the sunlight and shrivelled up to dust. If the robe proved a means of death, she determined to slay herself rather than live in disgrace. At that moment Hyllus bursts in to describe the horrible tortures which seized Heracles when he put on the poisoned mantle; the hero commanded his son to ferry him across from Euboea to witness the curse which his mother's evil deed would bring with it. Hearing these tidings Deianeira leaves the scene without uttering a word.

The old nurse quickly rushes in from the palace to tell how Deianeira had killed herself — while Hyllus was kissing her dead mother's lips in vain self-reproach, bereft of both his parents. Heracles himself is borne in on a litter, tormented with the slow consuming poison. In agony, he prays for death; when he learns of the decease of his wife and her beguilement by Nessus into an unintentional crime, his resentment softens. In a flash of inspiration the double meaning of the oracle comes over him, his labour is indeed over. Commanding Hyllus to wed Iole he passes on his last journey to the lonely top of Oeta, to be consumed on the funeral pyre.

The Sophoclean marks are clear enough in this play — the tragic moment, the life and movement, the splendid pathos, breadth of outlook and fascination of language. Yet there is a serious fault as well, for Sophocles, like the youngest of dramatists, can strangely enough make mistakes. The entry of Heracles practically makes the play double, marring its continuity. The necessary and remorseless sequence of events which is looked for in dramatic writing is absent. This tendency to disrupt a whole into parts brilliant but unrelated is a feature of Euripides' work; it may perhaps find a readier pardon exactly because Sophocles himself is not able to avoid it always. But the greatest triumph is the character of Deianeira. It is such as one would rarely find in warm-blooded Southern peoples. She dreads that loss of her power over her husband which her waning beauty

brings; she is grossly insulted in being forced to countenance a rival living in the same house after she has given her husband the best years of her life; yet she hopes on, and perhaps she would have won him back by her very gentleness. This creation of a type of almost perfect human nature is the justification of a poet's existence; it was a saying of Sophocles that he painted men as they ought to be, Euripides painted them as they are.

The rivalry of the younger poet produced its effect on another play with which Sophocles gained the first prize in 409. *Philoctetes,* the hero after whom it is named, had lit the funeral pyre of Heracles on Oeta and had received from him his unconquerable bow and arrows. When he went to Troy he was bitten in the foot by a serpent in Tenedos. As the wound festered and made him loathsome to the army he was left in Lemnos in the first year of the war. An oracle declared that Troy could not be taken without him and his arrows; at the end of the siege, as Achilles and Ajax were dead, Philoctetes, outraged and abandoned, became necessary to the Greeks. How could they win him over to rejoin them?

Odysseus his bitterest foe takes with him Neoptolemus, the young son of Achilles. Landing at Lemnos, they find the cave in which Philoctetes lives, see his rude bed, rough-hewn cup and rags of clothing, and lay their plot. Neoptolemus is to say that he is Achilles' son, homeward bound in anger with the Greeks for the loss of his father's arms. As he was not one of the original confederacy, Philoctetes will trust him. He is then to obtain the bow and arrows by treachery, for violence will be useless. The young man's soul rises against the idea of foul play but Odysseus bids him surrender to shamelessness for one day, to reap eternal glory. Left alone with the Chorus, composed of sailors from his ship, Neoptolemus pities the hero's deserted existence, wretched, famished and half-brutalised. He comes along towards them, creeping and crying in agony. Seeing them he inquires who they are; Neoptolemus answers as he had been bidden and wins the heart of Philoctetes who describes the misery of his life, his desertion and the unquenchable malady that feeds on him. In return Neoptolemus tells how he was beguiled to Troy by the prophecy that he should capture it after his father's death; arriving there he obtained possession of all Achilles' property except the arms, which Odysseus had won. He pretends to return to his ship, but Philoctetes implores him to set him once more in Greece. The great pathos of his appeal wins the youth's consent; they prepare to depart when a merchant enters with a sailor; from him they learn that Odysseus with Diomedes are on the way to bring Philoctetes by force or persuasion to Troy which cannot fall without his aid. The mere mention of Odysseus' name fills Philoctetes with anger and he retires to the cave, taking Neoptolemus with him.

When they reappear, a violent attack of the malady prostrates Philoctetes who

gives his bow to Neoptolemus, praying him to burn him and put an end to his agony. Noticing a strange silence in the youth, suspicions seem to be aroused in him, but when he falls into a slumber the Chorus takes a decided part in the action, advising the youth to fly with the bow and to talk in a whisper for fear of waking the sleeper. The latter unexpectedly starts out of slumber, again begging to be taken on board. Again Neoptolemus' heart smites him at the villainy he is about to commit; he reveals that his real objective is Troy. Betrayed and defenceless, Philoctetes appeals to Heaven, to the wild things, to Neoptolemus' better self to restore the bow which is his one means of procuring him food. A profound pity overcomes Neoptolemus, who is in the act of returning the weapon when Odysseus appears. Seeing him Philoctetes knows he is undone. Odysseus invites him to come to Troy of his own freewill, but is met with a curse; as he refuses to rejoin the Greeks, Odysseus and Neoptolemus depart bearing with them the bow for Teucer to use.

Left without that which brought him his daily food Philoctetes bursts out into a wild lyric dialogue with the Chorus. They advise him to make terms with Odysseus, but he bids them begone. When they obey, he recalls them to ask one little boon, a sword. At this moment Neoptolemus runs in, Odysseus close behind him. He has come to restore the bow he got by treachery. A violent quarrel ends in the temporary retirement of Odysseus. Advancing to Philoctetes, Neoptolemus gives him his property; Philoctetes takes it and is barely restrained from shooting at Odysseus who appears for a moment, only to take refuge in flight. Neoptolemus then tells him the whole truth about the prophecy, promising him great glory if he will go back to Troy which can fall only through him. In vain Neoptolemus assures him of a perfect cure; nothing will satisfy the broken man but a full redemption of the promise he had to be landed once more in Greece. When Neoptolemus tells him that such action will earn him the hatred of the Greeks, Philoctetes promises him the succour of his unerring shafts in a conflict.

The action has thus reached a deadlock. The problem is solved by the sudden appearance of the deified Heracles. He commands his old friend to go to Troy which he is to sack, and return home in peace. His lot is inseparably connected with that of Neoptolemus and a cure is promised him at the hands of Asclepius. This assurance overcomes his obstinacy; he leaves Lemnos in obedience to the will of Heaven.

Such is the work of an old dramatist well over eighty years old. It is exciting, vigorous, pathetic and everywhere dignified. The characters of the old hero and the young warrior are masterly. The Chorus takes an integral part in the action — its whisperings to Neoptolemus remind the reader of the evil suggestions of

which Satan breathed into Eve's equally guileless ears in *Paradise Lost*. But the most remarkable feature of the piece is its close resemblance to the new type of drama which Euripides had popularised. The miserable life of Philoctetes, his rags, destitution and sickness are a parallel to the Euripidean Telephus; most of all, the appearance of a god at the end to untie the knot is genuine Euripides. But there is a great difference; of the disjointed actions which disfigure later tragedy and are not absent from Sophocles' own earlier work there is not a trace. The odes are relevant, the Chorus is indispensable; in short, Sophocles has shown Euripides that he can beat him even on his own terms. Melodramatic the play may be, but it wins for its author our affection by the sheer beauty of a boyish nature as noble as Deianeira's; the return of Neoptolemus upon his own baseness is one of the many compliments Sophocles has paid to our human kind.

Many years previously Sophocles had written his masterpiece, the *Oedipus Tyrannus*. It cannot easily be treated separately from its sequel. A mysterious plague had broken out in Thebes; Creon had been sent to Delphi by Oedipus to learn the cause of the disaster. Apollo bade the Thebans cast out the murderer of the last King Laius, who was still lurking in Theban territory. Oedipus on inquiry learns that there are several murderers, but only one of Laius' attendants escaped alive. In discovering the culprit Oedipus promises the sternest vengeance on his nearest friends, nay, on his own kin, if necessary. After a prayer from the Chorus of elders he repeats his determination even more emphatically, invoking a curse on the assassin in language of a terrible double meaning, for in every word he utters he unconsciously pronounces his own doom. With commendable foresight he had summoned the old seer Teiresias, but the seer for some reason is unwilling to appear. When at last he confronts the King, he craves permission to depart with his secret unsaid. Oedipus at once flies into a towering passion, finally accusing him without any justification of accepting bribes from Creon. With equal heat Teiresias more and more clearly indicates in every speech the real murderer, though his words are dark to him who could read the Sphinx's riddle.

The Chorus break out into an ode full of uneasy surmises as to the identity of the culprit. When Creon enters, Oedipus flies at him in headlong passion accusing him of bribery, disloyalty and eventually of murder. With great dignity he clears himself, warning the King of the pains which hasty temper brings upon itself. Their quarrel brings out Jocasta, the Queen and sister of Creon, who succeeds in settling the unseemly strife. She bids Oedipus take no notice of oracles; one such had declared that Laius would be slain by his own son, who would marry her, his mother. The oracle was false, for Laius had died at the hands of robbers in a place where three roads met. Aghast at hearing this,

Oedipus inquires the exact scene of the murder, the time when it was committed, the actual appearance of Laius. Jocasta supplies the details, adding that the one survivor had implored her after Oedipus became King to live as far away as possible from the city. Oedipus commands him to be sent for and tells his life story. He was the reputed son of Polybus and Merope, rulers of Corinth. One day at a wine-party a man insinuated that he was not really the son of the royal pair. Stung by the taunt he went to Delphi, where he was warned that he should kill his father and marry his mother. He therefore fled away from Corinth towards Thebes. On the road he was insulted by an old man in a chariot who thrust him rudely from his path; in anger he smote the man at the place where three ways met. If then this man was Laius, he had imprecated a curse on himself; his one hope is the solitary survivor whom he had sent for; perhaps more than one man had killed Laius after all.

An ominous ode about destiny and its workings is followed by the entry of the Queen who describes the mad terrors of Oedipus. She is come to pray to Apollo to solve their troubles. At that moment a messenger enters from Corinth with the tidings that Polybus is dead. In eager joy Jocasta summons Oedipus, sneering at the truth of oracles. The King on his appearance echoes her words after hearing the tidings-only to sink back again into gloomy despondency. What of Merope, is she also dead? The messenger assures him that his anxiety about her is groundless, for there is no relationship between them. Little by little he tells Oedipus his true history. The messenger himself found him on Cithaeron in his infancy, his feet pierced through. He had him from a shepherd, a servant of Laius, the very man whom Oedipus had summoned. Suddenly turning to Jocasta, the King asks her if she knows the man. Appalled at the horror of the truth which she knows cannot be concealed much longer she affects indifference and beseeches him search no further. When he obstinately refuses, bidding the man be brought at once, she leaves the stage with the cry:

> “Alack, thou unhappy one; that is all I may call thee and never address thee again.”

Oedipus by a masterstroke of art is made to imagine that she has departed in shame, fearing he may be proved the son of a slave.

> “But I account myself the son of Fortune, who will never bring me to dishonour; my brethren are the months, who marked me out for lowliness and for power. Such being my birth, I shall never prove false to it and faint in finding out who I am.”

The awful power of this astonishing scene is manifest.

The bright joyousness of the King’s impulsive speech prepares the way for the coming horror. When the shepherd appears, the messenger faces him claiming his acquaintance. The shepherd doggedly attempts to deny all knowledge of him, cursing him for his mad talkativeness. Oedipus threatens torture to open his lips. Line by line the truth is dragged from him; the abandoned child came from another — from a creature of Laius — was said to be his son — was given him by Jocasta — to be destroyed because of an oracle — why then passed over to the Corinthian messenger?— “through pity, and he saved the child alive, for a mighty misery. If thou art that child, know that thou art born a hapless man”.

When the King rushes madly into the palace, the Chorus sings of his departed glory. The horrors increase with the appearance of a messenger from within, who tells how Oedipus dashed into Jocasta’s apartment to find her hanging in suicide; then he blinded himself on that day of mourning, ruin, death and shame. He comes out a little later, an object of utter compassion. How can he have rest on earth? How face his murdered father in death? The memories of Polybus and Merope come upon him, then the years of unnatural wedlock. Creon, whom he has wantonly insulted, comes not to mock at him, but to take him into the palace where neither land nor rain nor light may know him. Oedipus begs him to let him live on Cithaeron, beseeching him to look after his two daughters whose birth is so stained that no man can ever wed them. Creon gently takes him within, to be kept there till the will of the gods is known. The end is a sob of pity for the tragic downfall of the famous man who solved the Sphinx’ enigma.

No man can ever do justice to this masterpiece. It is so constructed that every detail leads up inevitably to the climax. Slowly, and playing upon all the deepest human emotions, anxiety, hope, gloom, terror and horror, Sophocles works on us as no man had ever done before. It is a sin against him to be content with a mere outline of the play; the words he has chosen are significant beyond description.

Again and again they fascinate the reader and always leave him with the feeling that there are still depths of thought left unsounded. The casual mention of the shepherd at the beginning of the play is the first stroke of perfect art; Jocasta's disbelief in oracles is the next; then follows the contrast between the Queen's real motive for leaving and the reason assigned to it by her son; finally, the shepherd in torture is forced to tell the secret which plunges the torturer to his ruin. Where is the like of this in literature? To us it is heart-searching enough. What was it to the Greeks who were familiar with the plot before they entered the theatre? When they who knew the inevitable end watched the King trace out his own ruin in utter ignorance, their feelings cannot have remained silent; they must have found relief in sobbing or crying aloud.

The fault in Oedipus is his ungovernable temper. It is firmly drawn in the play; he is equally unrestrained in anger, despair and hope. He is the typical instance of the lack of good counsel which we have seen was to Sophocles the prime source of a tragedy. Indeed, only a headlong man would hastily marry a widowed queen after he had committed a murder which fulfilled one half of a terrible oracle. He should have first inquired into the history of the Theban royal house. Imagining that the further he was fleeing from Corinth the more certain he was to make his doom impossible of fulfilment, he inevitably drew nearer to it. This is our human lot; we cannot see and we misinterpret warnings; how shall not weaker men tremble for themselves when Oedipus' wisdom could not save him from evil counsel?

In 405 Sophocles showed in his last play how Oedipus passed from earth in the poet's own birthplace, Colonus. Oedipus enters with Antigone, and on inquiry from a stranger finds that he is on the demesne of the Eumenides. At once he sends to Theseus, King of Athens, and refuses to move from the spot, for there he is fated to find his rest. A Chorus from Colonus comes to find out who the suppliant is. When they hear the name of Oedipus they are horror-struck and wish to thrust him out. After much persuasion they consent to wait till Theseus arrives. Presently Ismene comes with the news that Eteocles has dispossessed his elder brother Polyneices; further, an oracle from Delphi declares that Oedipus is all-important to Thebes in life and after death. His sons know this oracle and Creon is coming to force him back. Declaring he will do nothing for the sons who abandoned him, Oedipus obstinately refuses his city any blessing. He sends Ismene to offer a sacrifice to the Eumenides; in her absence Theseus enters, offers him protection and asks why he has come. Oedipus replies that he has a secret to reveal which is of great importance to Athens; at present there is peace between her and Thebes:

> “but in the gods alone is no age or death; all else Time confounds,
> mastering everything. Strength of the Earth and of the body wastes,
> trust dies, disloyalty grows, the same spirit never stands firm
> among friends or allies. To some men early, to others late,
> pleasures become bitter and then again sweet.”

The secret Oedipus will impart at the proper time. The need for protection soon comes. Creon attempts to persuade Oedipus to return to Thebes but is met by a curse, whereupon the Theban guards lay hold of Antigone — they had already seized Ismene — and menace Oedipus himself. Theseus hearing the alarm rushes back, reproaches Creon for his insolence and quickly returns with the two girls. He has strange news to tell; another Theban is a suppliant at the altar of Poseidon close by, craving speech with Oedipus. It is Polyneices, whom Antigone persuades her father to interview. The youth enters, ashamed of his neglect of his father, and begs a blessing on the army he has mustered against Thebes. He is met by a terrible curse which Oedipus invokes on both his sons. In despair Polyneices goes away to his doom.

> “For me, my path shall be one of care, disaster and sorrows sent me
> by my sire and his guardian angels; but, my sisters, be yours a
> happy road, and when I am dead fulfil my heart’s desire, for while
> I live you may never perform it.”

A thunderstorm is heard approaching; the Chorus are terrified at its intensity, but Oedipus eagerly dispatches a messenger for Theseus. When the King arrives he hears the secret; Oedipus’ grave would be the eternal protection of Attica, but no man must know its site save Theseus who has to tell it to his heir alone, and he to his son, and so onwards for ever. The proof of Oedipus’ word would be a miracle which soon would transform him back to his full strength. Presently he

arises, endued with a mysterious sight, beckoning the others to follow him. The play concludes with a magnificent description of his translation. A voice from Heaven called him, chiding him for tarrying; commending his daughters to the care of Theseus, he greeted the earth and heaven in prayer and then without pain or sorrow passed away. On reappearing Theseus promised to convey the sisters back to Thebes and to stop the threatened fratricidal strife.

The *Oedipus Coloneus*, like the *Philoctetes*, the other play of Sophocles' old age, closes in peace. The old fiery passions still burn fiercely in Oedipus, as they did in Lear; yet both were "every inch a king" and "more sinned against than sinning". Oedipus' miraculous return to strength before he departs is curiously like the famous end of Colonel Newcome. There are subtle but unmistakable marks of the Euripidean influence on this drama; such are the belief that Theban worthies would protect Athens, the Theseus tradition, and the recovery of worn-out strength. These features will meet us in the next chapter. But it is again noteworthy that Sophocles has added those touches which distinguish his own firm and delicate handiwork. There is nothing of melodrama, nothing inconsequent, nothing exaggerated. It is the dramatist's preparation for his own end. Shakespeare put his valediction into the mouth of Prospero; Sophocles entrusted his to his greatest creation Oedipus. Like him, he was fain to depart, for the gods called. Our last sight of him is of one beckoning us to follow him to the place where calm is to be found; to find it we must use not the eyes of the body, but the inward illumination vouchsafed by Heaven.

To the Athenians of the Periclean age Sophocles was the incarnation of their dramatic ideal. His language is a delight and a despair. It tantalises; it suggests other meanings besides its plain and surface significance. This riddling quality is the daemonic element which he possessed in common with Plato; because of it these two are the masters of a refined and subtle irony, a source of the keenest pleasure. His plots reveal a vivid sense of the exact moment which will yield the intensest tragic effects — only on one particular day could Ajax die or Electra be saved. Accordingly, Sophocles very often begins his play with early dawn, in order to fill the few all-important hours with the greatest possible amount of action. He has put the maximum of movement into his work, only the presence ofthe Chorus and the conventional messengers (two features imposed on him by the law of the Attic theatre) making the action halt.

But it is in the sum-total of his art that his greatness lies; the sense of a whole is its controlling factor; details are important, indeed, he took the utmost pains to see that they were necessary and convincing — yet they were details, subordinate, closely related, not irrelevant nor disproportionate. This instinct for a definite plan first is the essence of the classical spirit; exuberance is rigorously

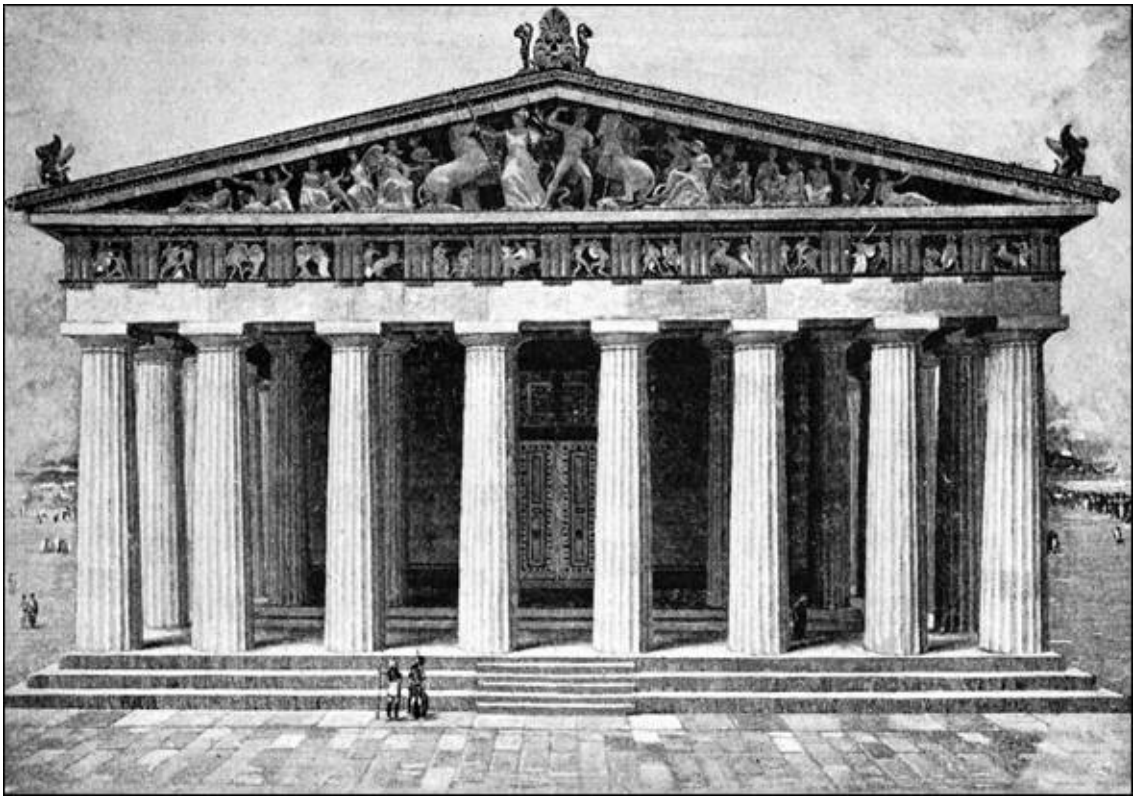
repressed, symmetry and balance are the first, last and only aim. To some judges Sophocles is like a Greek temple, splendid but a little chilly; they miss the soaring ambition of Aeschylus or the more direct emotional appeal of Euripides. Yet it is a cardinal error to imagine that Sophocles is passionless; his life was not, neither are his characters. Like the lava of a recent eruption, they may seem ashen on the surface, but there is fire underneath; it betrays itself through the cracks which appear when their substance is violently disturbed.

They, much enforced, show a hasty spark
And straight are cold again.

Repression, avoidance of extremes, dignity under provocation are the marks of the gentle Sophoclean type and it is a very high type indeed.

For we have in him the very fountain of the whole classical tradition in drama. Sophocles is something far more important than a mere influence; he is an ideal, and as such is indestructible. To ask the names of writers who came most under his “influence” is as sensible as to ask the names of the sculptors who most faithfully followed the Greek tradition of statuary. He is Classical tragedy. The main body of Spanish and English drama is romantic, the Sophoclean ideal is that of the small but powerful body of University men in Elizabeth’s time headed by Ben Jonson, of the typically French school of dramatists, of Moratin, Lessing, Goethe, of the exponents of the Greek creed in nineteenth-century England, notably Matthew Arnold and Walter Pater, and of Robert Bridges. To this school the cultivation of emotional expression is suspicious, if not dangerous; it leads to eccentricity, to the revelation of feelings which frequently are not worth experiencing, to sentimental flabbiness, to riot and extravagance. Perhaps in dread of the ridiculous the Classical school represses itself too far, creating characters of marble instead of flesh. These creations are at least worth looking at and bring no shame; they are better than the spectral psychological studies which many dramatists, now dead or dying, have bidden us believe are real men and women.

The Parthenon. Sophocles died in Athens at the age of ninety or ninety-one in the winter of 406/5 BC. There are many apocryphal stories surrounding his death, including the suggestion that he died from the strain of trying to recite a long sentence from his Antigone without pausing to take a breath. Another account suggests he choked while eating grapes at the Anthesteria festival in Athens.



A modern reconstruction of the Parthenon's west front